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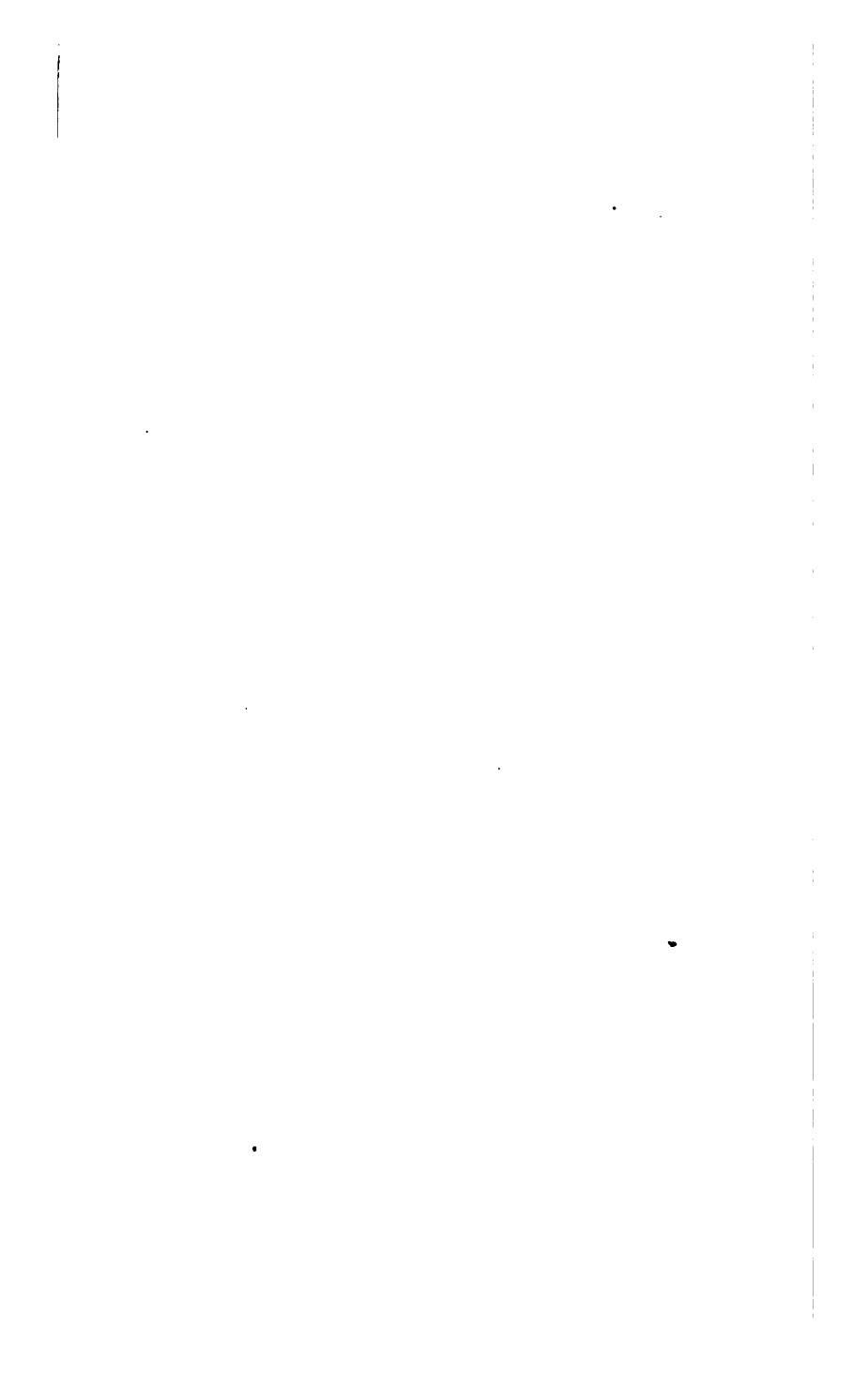












# CHARACTER;

OR,

## JEW AND GENTILE:

A Tale.

BY

Mrs. LEMAN GRIMSTONE,

AUTHOR OF "WOMAN'S LOVE," &c. &c.

\_\_\_\_\_ 36

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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## P R E F A C E.

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To invite thinking rather than to give my own thoughts—to invite that train of thinking that will make us more liberal, more considerate towards each other, are among the motives from which I write.

I desire to be identified with no system. In each, perhaps, there is good ; to that portion in each I should wish to cleave ; but, in general, a system is a sort of Procrustean bed, not made for Humanity to lie on, but one on which it is endeavoured to *make* Humanity lie.

Few are fitted to be moral dictators: all to be moral doers. Among the latter, in the wide

vineyard of the world, I seek to be a fellow-labourer. As I believe morals and amusement to be intimately blended, in the endeavour to advance the one, I adopt the medium of the other. To my readers, or, as I better like to call them, to my friends, I present my work, and, relying on my intentions rather than my performance, hope they will be kindly disposed to "take the will for the deed."

\*.\* Some anachronisms occur, and have been left without note: those that detect them will be most ready to pardon them; to those that do not, they are of no consequence.

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# CHARACTER ;

OR,

JEW AND GENTILE.

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## CHAPTER I.

"HERE'S a hubbub and a bustle about the birth of a boy ! as if such an event had not happened any time these ten thousand years : as if we had not already more than we want, or know what to do with !"

Thus soliloquized Peter Coverley, an old bachelor, in a very audible, but not very agreeable tone, as he seized the poker and stirred the fire with violence. In the event to which he alluded, he had only the collateral interest of a grand uncle : Mr. Beaucaire, his nephew, being the father of the new-born.

Mr. Coverley was too far advanced in life, and too selfish in his habits, to sympathize with the lively interest that agitated all else in the establishment. He could not easily forgive the abstraction of certain "creature comforts," which, in the general disarrangement of the household, he had been doomed to experience. He missed the society of his nephew, who, every day after dinner, was accustomed to regale him over his "wine and walnuts" with city news, the variation of the funds, and all the *et ceteras* that, to the retired man of business, remain, from the force of habit, matters of interest: Mr. Coverley missed also the singularly beautiful face of Mrs. Beaucaire, and her quiet, obsequious attentions. All this made a woful hiatus in his habitudes, and it had existed for some time; for the delicacy of Mrs. Beaucaire's health had compelled her, for the few last months, to reside entirely in the country, at the house of her brother, where, somewhat prematurely, she gave birth to a son;



an event for which every preparation had been made at her own house in Broad-street ; but which were made in vain, since the young heir first saw the light at Highgate.

“ Aye, aye,” resumed Mr. Coverley, “ now this has become a baby-house, it will be a Babel next !”

He rang the bell violently. “ Coals on the fire !” he growled as soon as his summons was answered. “ What’s become of John ?” he added, perceiving a female servant had made her appearance.

“ Gone to my mistress, sir.”

“ Aye, I thought so !” groaned Mr. Coverley, as fuel was added to the fire. “ And pray what’s become of your master ?”

“ *He* has gone to my mistress, sir ; John drives him.”

Mr. Coverley puffed forth the gathering sighs, and said, snappishly, “ Am I to have any tea to-night ?”

“ Yes, sir, directly !” said the girl, and no-

wise loth, she retreated from the room, as with a half-averted head, and a scowling brow, Mr. Coverley's eyes followed her to the door.

"Here's a way she's thrown the coals on!" he exclaimed, brandishing the poker. "Never saw a woman do anything right in my life!"

He poked the fire, but did not improve it. English fires, like English people, require some management to make them throw out warmth and brighten into a blaze; when they can be made to do that, there are no firesides or faces equal to them in all the world.

Mr. Coverley, as the irritability of his humour increased, brought his chair with a sudden hitch in violent contact with the fender, and consequently subverted poker, shovel, and tongs; which all came down as if emulously striving to see which could make the most noise.

"Not a thing in this house is as it ought to be, or used to be, since the birth of that boy," exclaimed Mr. Coverley. "What, I suppose,"

he continued, stooping his cumbersome frame with a laborious effort, and mimicking the voice of the maid-servant, "you want to go to your\_mistress, too?"

He replaced the refractory fire-irons; but with even less accuracy than activity, and, as it may be remarked, misfortunes always follow in a sequence, the implements thought proper to descend again, with even less attention to harmony of sound, or happiness of position.

“ Then there you may lie and be —— ”

What more Mr. Coverley might have added may not be affirmed, for he was interrupted by the sudden opening of the door, and the entrance of Hannah Reece, the cook. In she came a-tiptoe and erect, for the purpose of making her noiseless way to a closet at the farther end of the room. The moment Mr. Coverley caught a glance of her antiquated figure, (she was a sort of heirloom in the family,) he turned sharply round so as to present

a most unsociable-looking back to the intruder, in the hope (vain hope!) that his own incommunicative taciturnity might become contagious. Hannah, however, did not perceive his design, nor, if she had, is it very probable she would have promoted it.

“ Bless me, sir !” she exclaimed, looking at the unsnuffed candles, and the prostrate poker, shovel, and tongs, “ Here’s a place ! Why, you be quite neglected like ; ah ! I knew how it would be !” and she approached the table with the purpose of improving the lights.

Mr. Coverley, who was very like the pictures extant of Dr. Johnson, might at that moment have sat for the model of suppressed irritability. His hands were upon his knees, his mouth pursed up, his massy figure rendered unusually unsightly by the elevation of the shoulder over which he turned his head, watching, with an oblique cast of his eyes, the movements of Hannah. Perhaps the peculiarity of

his appearance drew or distracted her attention; for, instead of snuffing the candle, she snuffed it *out*.

"Aye—you had better have let it alone!" said Mr. Coverley in a tone of quiet, concentrated contempt, as he received this further confirmation of his favourite axiom, that a woman can do nothing right.

Fortunately before Hannah had time to attack the remaining light, John appeared with the tea equipage, and superseded her with dapper adroitness in the duties she had so unhappily undertaken.

"What is the weather like, John?" asked Mr. Coverley, relaxing from the severity of his humour as the prospect of some comfort began to beam upon him.

"Very foggy, sir," said John, letting down the crimson curtains, "but the frost is giving."

"Ah! I *knew* it would," exclaimed Hannah, returning with a jar in her hand from the closet, in which, for the last moment or two, she

had been sequestered. "Now, sir," she continued, looking at Mr. Coverley, "for goodness sake don't *you* think of going out this night ; for at *your* time of life——"

A hasty summons, at this juncture, providentially carried Mrs. Reece from the room, or there is no saying what might have been the consequences, for she had succeeded in setting the vane of Mr. Coverley's humour to the worst possible aspect.

John set up the fire-irons, and set down the toast ; swept the hearth, and smoothed the rug ; the fire blazed, the urn bubbled, and the large heavy-looking parlour was restored to its habitual air of solid comfort, with a celerity which made John a domestic favourite, or rather a favourite domestic. All, however, was vain, the cloud cleared not from Mr. Coverley's brow, not even when the evening paper was presented, which, as it supported his side of politics, might have afforded a panacea to his wounded feelings. He snatched the journal with an impatient twitch, put on

his spectacles, through which he frowned fearfully, and began, in a meet mood for ordinary criticism, to read the leading article.

Mr. Coverley was the descendant of a Suffolk family. Many of its members, in the various mutations of this changeful life, had been cast, here and there, about the world, but a small knot of the more prudent portion, of which he was a part, wisely remained at home, laughing at those of their kindred that realized the old adage, that a "rolling stone gathers no moss." The thickskulls, for they were a race-remarkable for their heads, and might be divided into classes, staid in Suffolk, or migrated no farther than London; gathered all they could get, and kept all they gathered. It might be said of money in their grasp, as it was of the Greek in Porson's head; the wonder was how it got there; for once there, it was secure of not getting away again. The papersculls, another sub-division of this family, married, because they "loved, not wisely, but too well," and

trouble, or asked anything of him ; and thus, though he suffered her to live in want, and die in distress, he took compassion on the parentless boy she left behind her. In taking possession of her few effects, Mr. Coverley became master of Maria's papers. In looking over these, greatly to his surprise, he discovered the rough draft of various letters which he had received in the hand-writing, and with the signature of Catherine Craven ; on looking further, he found autographs of this lady, requesting Maria to write the aforesaid letters with " great energy and touching affection."

Had anything been wanting to determine the destination of Mr. Coverley's wealth, this had been sufficient. He immediately wrote to Mrs. Craven, demanding restitution of various sums she had wrung from him by way of loan, sarcastically adding, that he lamented he could not write with the " great energy and touching affection" she *used* to do, but if he could not be pathetic, he could be peremptory, and it



would be at her peril if any unnecessary delay in meeting his demand occurred.

Under these circumstances, little Ralph became the especial favourite of his uncle, and the particular aversion of all the rest of the family. In spite of malignant predictions, the offspring of malignant wishes, he grew up remarkably endowed by intellectual and personal advantages, realizing what his uncle had been perpetually prophesying, "that the boobies of the family, which, by the help of marriage, were not few, would feel their inferiority in his presence."

Ralph Beaucaire, at the period this story commences (about 1808), was thirty years of age, and had succeeded his uncle as head of a large banking concern. He had married a beautiful woman, yet it was a match more of prudence than passion, and five years had elapsed, ere the wish of offspring, so natural to the wedded, was realized by the birth of a son.

To return to Mr. Coverley. The tea things had been taken away, and the newspaper read

with a deliberation that aimed at prolonging the enjoyment to the latest possible moment, when, to Mr. Coverley's infinite satisfaction, Dr. Clare, an old friend and townsman, was announced.

"I fear," cried the latter, as they shook hands, "you will think this late visit as intrusive as it is——" unceremonious he would have added ; but Mr. Coverley interrupted him.

"Quite the reverse," he exclaimed. "I was getting confoundedly tired of my own company, as we generally do of that of which we have too much. I assure you there are few in the world it gives me greater pleasure to see than yourself ; and you know enough of old Peter Coverley, to be aware he would not say as much, though it were to save your life, were it not the fact."

The Doctor smiled his usual quiet smile, and, seating himself near the fire, held his thin delicate hands before it, to relieve the numbing sensation of cold from which he suffered

Mr. Coverley rang the bell, moderately ; he

always rang according to the humour he was in. The woman servant once more appeared.

"Attend to the fire, there's a good mauther," he cried, using a Suffolk phrase: "and then bring the punch bowl and glasses, and all the *et cæteras*."

The girl moved with an alacrity proportioned to the tone of kindness in which she was addressed. It is strange that force is so continually preferred to persuasion; an oiled hinge always moves easily. In a few minutes the table was furnished with glasses, bottles, and a large china bowl, beside which appeared lemons and loaf sugar.

"Now," cried Mr. Coverley, looking with delight over the table, "hot water, Ann: I have kept you in it all day; it is hard if you cannot afford me some to-night."

Some of the better principles of Mr. Coverley's nature were evolving under the influence of friendship and the prospect of pleasure; and it was thus he would continually repair the

breaches made by bad humour, and win back good will. He generally brightened over the bowl, and he did so especially this evening ; even permitting Dr. Clare to peel a small portion of a lemon in aid of the beverage about to be prepared, but not without reiterated inquiries as to whether he was peeling it “ *very* thin.”

When the punch was made, and the glasses filled, the Doctor proposed a toast in honour of the young heir. In this Mr. Coverley most heartily joined ; then putting down his glass, with visible satisfaction at its contents, he continued—

“ Yes, yes ; it is all as it should be ; and I hope this event will make Ralph and his wife all the happier. But do you know this business *almost* put me out of humour ? Why there could not have been a greater fuss if the Great Mogul had arrived. Every body was in requisition ; as for *me*—there was not a soul in the house that seemed to care if I perished of cold and hunger. The coachman was sent one

way, the groom another ; ask for whom or what I would, it was engaged for Mrs. Beaumais ; till I'll be shot if I did not expect she'd lay claim to everything, from my wig to my walking stick."

A gentle laugh was just audible from the thin, almost pale lips of Dr. Clare, who, though many years Mr. Coverley's junior, had known him long enough to have attained an accurate knowledge of his character, and needed no minutiae of detail to enable him to form a notion of his humour and mode of expressing it, when under circumstances of inconvenience.

"However," concluded Mr. Coverley, "here's to Amelia's health, and may her boy prove a blessing to her!"

"And to all!" added Dr. Clare, when he had done honour to the toast. "But that will depend upon herself, and the persons and circumstances by which she surrounds him. His own happiness, and that of all connected with him, will depend upon his character, with the forma-

tion of which he will himself have nothing to do. Poor little fellow ! here he is, in this inconsistent world, unconscious and incapable ; at the mercy of others ; and the impressions they will make on his senses will give the irreversible bias to his character."

" You assert that," said Mr. Coverley, " without reservation or qualification ?"

" Assuredly. We are the creatures of education, receiving the word in its most extended sense. Everything we see, hear, and feel, is education—tends to form the mind to some prevailing bias. We can be no other than we are thus made, whatever else we may desire to be. It has been said, ' What man by thinking can add a cubit to his stature ?' It may equally well be asked, what man can add to or take away from his character that has grown with his growth, and strengthened with his strength——"

" My dear Clare, you are entirely wrong. Nature gives character, education modifies, and experience perfects it. This boy, with the Co-

verley blood, will have the Coverley character, be he reared how or by whom he may."

"Forgive me," cried Dr. Clare, who was as fond of the theme as his friend of the bowl—"forgive me, that I do that which you do not like—oppose you. Nature gives us the material out of which character is made, that is, intellectual capacity and physical organization; among these there are the strong and the weak, and many intermediate grades of power. Education, (in which I comprehend all the influencing circumstances of situation and association,) acting on the natural materials, determines character, as the architect does the nature of the fabric he builds. The strongest materials will take the most confirmed biases, therefore the greatest rascals, under other moral circumstances than those by which they are formed, would be the best men: for education determines the *kind*; nature the *degree* of power. We are as much in the hands of others as this bowl of excellent punch was in yours; and well

for the world would it be if all parents and preceptors were as good hands at making character, as you at making punch."

Mr. Coverley smiled at this tribute of applause, and attested his conviction of its truth by replenishing his glass, as Dr. Clare resumed speaking

"Unfortunately the ingredients of character are rarely as well mixed. Most of us get a considerable share of the strong, heady spirit ; few of us escape an infusion of the acid and the bitter in much larger proportions than you have admitted them to your excellent bowl ; still fewer have the corrective of so much sweetness ; while the majority are so diluted by the waters of indifference, indolence, and ignorance, that the effects of natural organization or accidental instruction continually become neutralized. Depend upon it, my dear sir, as you bend the twig the tree will grow."

"This is a well-sounding theory," said Mr. Coverley, "but has little to do with practice, or



why did you not see more I gathered? Why did you not bend your own wings to their aid? them? for by God they are a noble race of trees as ever grew together in a forest. Why it was never I shall not say. I am of all your children, and I am a man, Clare? And Mr. Dwyer said, "a heavy laugh."

"Like most people," said Mr. Dwyer, "I was disturbed by the same thing. I became a parent with a child, and the request for an education, perhaps, even more than the limitations of a child, with which they were born, with which they were born, little and thoughtless. I called on a man, and he was secure for them, and after the usual year of study, I was fitted to be my child's teacher, efficient as I could have been."

have materially influenced the individual association and social circumstances by which my children were surrounded : these were of course perpetually making impressions—adding bricks to the edifice of character. Till society becomes sensible that character is thus formed, and strives to create a state of things that shall operate favourably on forming minds, the world will remain the inconstant, miserable mass it is. We shall continue to inflict and suffer penalty and punishment for offences to which we are trained and training—we shall continue to deal out and endure odium, hatred, and contempt for characteristics that are as inevitable to our neglected moral constitutions, as disease and deformity are to our neglected physical constitutions.”

“ A most comfortable doctrine ! ” exclaimed Mr. Coverley. “ Pray provide yourself with a bell, collect all the rascals you can, and proclaim it. When we next meet, I shall have the satisfaction of telling you that I have had my house pillaged, or my pocket picked, by some scoun-

drel who philosophically told me he could not help it—for that he acted according to the formation of his character. Or I might never tell you all this, in consequence of having got my throat cut with the like consolatory assurance. Nature, sir," continued Mr. Coverley, becoming stern, "has given every man a conscience, by which he knows right from wrong ; he that acts against its dictates is a villain, and deserves to be hanged, as I wish all villains were."

"My dear Mr. Coverley, bad education, private and public, domestic and social, makes villains. Hanging cuts off the distempered, but does not touch the disease. As to the intuitive instincts that humanity may follow, they are few, and liable, like all other portions of its economy, to be biassed by home-training and conventional usage. That which is virtue in one age, is vice in another ; that which gains applause in that country, incurs execration in this ; that which is venial there, is vicious here. The moral sense, on which you lay so much stress,

seems to me mentally, what touch is physically—a perception, the delicacy of which is soon destroyed, and is at best limited in its operation. Moral knowledge, like scientific knowledge, is the growth of experience: it requires more patient and persevering culture than it has yet received. All selfishness (diseased self-love) seeks individual, independent of, or in contradistinction to, universal good. This is a part and proof of the crudeness of society, a very slight view of which, from the atom to the aggregate, is sufficient to show us how crude it is.”

“ Now do you imagine,” interrogated Mr. Coverley, “ that improvement could follow on your system of extenuating and latitudinizing vice? Self-preservation is the first law of nature; in obedience to that law, society cuts off its corrupt members, for the sake of the healthy. *You* would sacrifice the sound to the unsound, and preach pity for the vicious in place of punishment ! ”

Ah ! my dear sir, punishment is regarded

as the grand panacea:—it is the belief in its efficacy that perpetuates our evils. As long as we hold the power of punishment, and deem it a sufficient antidote to crime, (while it is the virus by which we inoculate society with new vice,) we shall decline adopting preventives, which the old adage tells us are better than cures. This adage is as applicable to the million as the man. But social policy, like a nefarious quack, induces disease, and then applies nostrums, which begin with torturing, and end with destroying, the victim, who ultimately communicates contagion, in some new and worse form, to those around him. Do you imagine that one among the crowd that witness an execution ever goes away a better man? No. There is no security against vice but moral intelligence, and a just social arrangement. Punishments and penalties are scarecrows unnecessary to the enlightened, and useless to the ignorant. The latter do not love the crime the less because they are made to fear its conse-

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quences ; these only sharpen their ingenuity to invent new vices to help them to their old ones ; and thus hypocrisy, in some sanctioned garb, crawls to the accomplishment of the crime it cannot compass openly. All vice has its source in error of judgment—in depraved opinions of the essentials of happiness. All virtue flows from truth of judgment and correct views on the same subject. To prevent man from pursuing happiness, is to attempt to break one of the most immutable of nature's laws : when, by the light of moral knowledge, he discovers the right road, he will take it, and keep it. Let our domestic and public institutions promote truth, sympathy, and social feeling ; and the greedy, grasping, grudging vices will become as rare as pitted faces since the discovery of vaccination, or as deformity since the disuse of swaddling-clothes. The unjust and discrepant arrangement existing in society, produces the errors and inconsistencies existing in its members. To what does the religionist ascribe the imagined

purity of saints and angels in the kingdom of God? Is it not to the Divine government and immaculate association? Do they wonder at the virtue of the blessed? Do they hold their stainless course of existence matter of praise? No. Because both one and the other is a pure matter of necessity from the existing causes that operate to the inevitable production of such happy effects. Let them apply the same argument to the world. Let it teach them to pity the sinner, and reform the state of things that makes him such, instead of perpetuating them, and punishing him."

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## CHAPTER II.

WITH Mrs. Beaucaire comfort, order, and regularity came back to Broad Street; though she brought her babe, and his and her own nurse with her.

"Ralph, dear," she cried, the very first evening of her return, "I mean to insist on *all* a mother's rights."

"Some say there are no rights, only duties," he replied.

"Now, dear Ralph, talk no logic to me; it is not talk for a lady: all I mean to say is, that I insist I have a right to do just as I like with this dear boy;" and she looked at the infant asleep on her lap. "I tell you so now," she continued, "to prevent our quarrelling about him by and by."

"Heaven forbid! Amelia," said her hus-

band, (and he took the child's hand as he spoke,) "that this sweet fellow should ever be the cause of anything but increased harmony between us. You can scarcely claim more power over both him and me than I think you entitled to."

This was one of those declarations that, like many made in courtship and during the honeymoon, serve the purpose of the moment, and are perhaps sincere at the time, but are rarely acted up to. However, like bills destined to be protested, they serve to keep off the evil day; and insolvency of whatever kind, if it cannot be ultimately prevented, is always well postponed.

"But," resumed Mr. Beaucaire, "what is it you have got in this pretty head of yours?"

"A fancy about naming this dear boy. I claim the privilege of giving him a name of my own choice."

"Have you made that choice?" said Mr. Beaucaire, kindly. "If you have, let me know what name it is."

“ One that I have long admired beyond all others,” she replied—“ Marmion ! ”

An indescribable shadow eclipsed the brilliancy of Mr. Beaucaire's countenance. He had expected she would have given his own name to her son ; and as a feeling, if not of pain, yet one very remote from pleasure, passed through Mr. Beaucaire's heart, he resigned the little hand he had till now held.

“ I think,” she continued, without perceiving the effect she had produced, “ Marmion is such a pretty name !—it cannot be clipped into a nick-name : it is almost equivalent to a title, and will distinguish the child as much.”

“ May it be his fate always to desire and deserve distinction ! ” observed Mr. Beaucaire, as the hurt his vanity had received began to pass off. “ My boy, like the rose, will be sweet to me under any name ; but my uncle will perhaps think we might have revived *his* in our child—at least it would have been a compliment

he well merits—he has been more than a father to me.”

“ Well, love,” rejoined Mrs. Beaucaire, alive to future interests, if not to past services, “ if you think it will please your uncle, and perhaps make him think more of this darling, let us call him Marmion Coverley, making your uncle’s his second name. I could not endure Peter any way—it is so very frightful. What barbarous parents there must have been in your family to give unoffending children such hideous names! Well, love, shall it be as I say ? ” adhering with quiet pertinacity to her original purpose.

“ I am not going to interfere with any of your privileges,” he replied, “ least of all the unimportant one in question. Name the child what you like.”

A few days after this conversation, Hannah Reece requested permission to see her mistress ; but she was denied access by the nurse, though now in the last week of her brief authority. “ From time whereof,” as the lawyers say, “ the

memory of man knoweth not to the contrary," nurses have been highly-privileged persons: like all that have power, they presume upon the weakness they pretend to guide, but really endeavour to govern, without having in themselves any of those qualities which ensure respect, by meriting gratitude. Old women, obstinate, illiterate, and superstitious, are the attendants too often placed about young mothers and their helpless offspring. Nurses, and those departed worthies, watchmen, seem to have been selected for office on one and the same principle, that is, deemed fit guardians of the sick room and sleeping city, because unfit for anything on the face of the earth. Time has consigned one class of these imbeciles to "the tomb of the Capulets;" may time elevate the others into that which the interests of humanity demand !

Nursing should be held as a profession, and its professors be endowed with a suitable education —be called to the exercise of its duties while yet in the vigour of life, and not after. Appointed

to act as the adjunct of the surgeon and physician, ought they not to possess some kindred intelligence? How often, for the want of this, has the best medical advice proved nugatory! It is not contended or desired that women should supersede or rival the male practitioner, since excess of sympathy, it is to be feared, would ever be liable to endanger female efficiency. But as the assistant, the agent of the medical man, woman, under all circumstances of illness, is, beyond description, essential; but it must be cultivated woman, capable of comprehending the intelligence she acts with, and the necessities she acts on.

We shudder to think of the mischief and misery ignorant nurses have done and may cause. They are about humanity when it lies in the prostration of physical and, consequently, mental weakness,—when it is drawing its first breath, and essaying its dawning powers. A few years ago in France,—perhaps still in the remote provinces,—it was common for nurses to

compress the heads of infants by actual violence or continued pressure, if the shape of the skull did not happen to please them. In our own country, in our own day, the administration of ardent spirits, from a motive of mistaken kindness, is common, especially among the poorer classes; and, be it remembered, the best benefactors and the brightest ornaments of the human species have been given to the world by poor women.

Neglect and indifference to mankind in the mass pervade society throughout, and generate the mischief that lame laws and subsequent quackery vainly attempt to cure. In nothing is the truth of this assertion more conspicuous than in all that regards the birth and first years of the human being. It is the fate of the great majority of the species to fall from the hands of nature into the hands of an ignorant nurse and an ignorant mother; after these, schoolmasters, doctors, divines, lawyers, and legislators tinker the injured individual till death comes to his

rescue ; nor even then can his memory or his soul escape speculations that are busy with his fame here and his fate hereafter. But most conspicuous in this blindfold system, that paralyses human progress, is the disregard of female cultivation. In all the departments of life in which *men* are called to act, some preparatory discipline is deemed necessary and afforded ; but where women are concerned, the presiding deity is chance. No provision is made to fit *them* for their allotments, though they are called to fill offices involving the most vital interests of society. Women extract knowledge from practice—they rarely bring knowledge to it : that, under such circumstances, they so often acquit themselves with ability, is pregnant with proof that mental power is the unalienable property of humanity ; and, since it thus bursts above the blight of neglect, and repels the effects of mistaken institutions, what, under better auspices, might not be hoped from it ?

When the authoritative nurse departed,



Hannah obtained her object, and was admitted to the conference with Mrs. Beaucaire that she so anxiously desired.

“ Madam,” cried the old woman, after sundry bridlings and wriggings, to adjust her body into the true perpendicular with which auricular wisdom loves to announce itself, “ If I may be allowed, I come to speak to you about the name that you are giving to *my* young master.”

Accustomed as Mrs. Beaucaire had been for years to the eccentricity of Hannah, she could not help feeling surprised at the boldness and amused at the singularity of her address, as well as the subject on which she had chosen to interfere.

“ Madam,” resumed Hannah, “ you will do very wrong if you do not name your child after its father. I am sure he is not pleased that you do not; nor, for the matter of that, am I. O madam, when I heard of that unchristian, unscriptural, unfamily name, that you talked of, I was so angered ! It will always put me in mind

of mammon. Ah! Heaven keep you, my poor child, from the mammon of unrighteousness!" she concluded, with a deep-drawn sigh, and addressing the unconscious cause of the controversy.

"These are your old-fashioned notions, Hannah," mildly observed Mrs. Beaucaire, with a smile. "I suppose you would have a first-born named after its father, though that father's name was Nebuchadnezzar, Jehoshaphat, or Jeroboam."

"Certainly—yes—to be sure, madam, I would," exclaimed Hannah, with eager and reiterated affirmation. "And so would the father, too, madam. And it is only what is right and proper. That child ought to be called Ralph—it might be as well to add Peter. Pardon my freedom, madam; but I *do* hope you will be persuaded."

"I assure you I shall not," said Mrs. Beaucaire, in the gentlest manner, who, like all quiet people, was most immoveable. "If Mr.

Beaucaire was very earnestly to press it, perhaps——”

“ Madam, Mr. Beaucaire will not do that ! I knew Mr. Beaucaire before you did—he’s a deal of pride, and you have hurt his pride. Madam, be careful of that boy ; he will need all the love that he can get of his father, and every body else.”

“ Good Heavens, Hannah ! what is it you mean ? You do not surely pretend to say that this child has any signs of misfortune about him, or the circumstances of his birth ? ”

“ Madam,” said Hannah, holding up her head, and smoothing down her apron, “ I see and know a deal more than I say, or than it would be proper I *should* say. However, this I’ll tell you, and take my word for it, all boys born in January are unruly, fiery, flighty fellows ; as full of tantrums as a fowl is of feathers.”

Mrs. Beaucaire laughed. The momentary alarm into which maternal solicitude had be-

trayed her, yielded to her better sense, the more readily that her own experience contradicted Hannah's theory.

"Ah! madam," resumed the latter, "I know exactly how it will be. You'll see what I say come true; that boy will be as restless as the waves of the sea. And allow me, that has had some experience, to tell you, madam, that you can't do a worse thing than to be continually taking him up to look at him, and disturbing him with showing him to people, as you do. It is enough to give *any* child a fidgety turn; and there is no telling how soon, and by what trifles, we affect the disposition."

Mrs. Beaucaire, who was with her infant like a child with a new toy, instantly stilled her knee on which she was jogging the little pet. There was something of truth and analogy in Hannah's last remark; and the old woman gained on her mistress's attention, though her original claim upon it consisted in her being a favourite with Mr. Beaucaire.

“ Let me lay him in his cot, madam ; you are only fatiguing yourself and fidgeting him. There, madam,” she continued, closing the curtains, “ let him be quiet as long as he will. It will not be very long, I warrant me.”

As if willing to throw the weight of his own authority on the subject of his character into Hannah’s scale, the child made a most clamorous outcry, and was in consequence committed to his nurse.

“ Ay, ay,” said Hannah, “ you’ll be attended to, that’s clear. You know how to be master and get minded. He’s in a pretty passion ! I guess who he takes after.”

“ Not after *me*, Hannah,” said the lady.

“ No, madam ; nor after his father. You are both as good-tempered as may be—I *will* say that. But there *is* a person in this house, for whom nobody can say as much—he *is* a temper, *surely* !”

“ Hush, hush !” said Mrs. Beaucaire, “ you and Mr. Coverley do not agree ; but he is a good man.”

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"Ah ! madam," resumed the latter, "I know exactly how it will be. You'll see what I say come true ; that boy will be as restless as the waves of the sea. And allow me, that has had some experience, to tell you, madam, that you can't do a worse thing than to be continually taking him up to look at him, and disturbing him with showing him to people, as you do. It is enough to give *any* child a fidgety turn ; and there is no telling how soon, and by what trifles, we affect the disposition."

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## CHAPTER III.

DISPLEASED as Mr. Coverley had been at the outset of the event of young Beaucaire's birth, he soon became, not only reconciled, but even delighted with the addition to the family; and gave significant hints of intentions of providing for the boy, that were not a little comforting to his parents. With this object in view, Mr. Coverley talked of a journey into Suffolk; to consult about which he went one evening to the lodgings of Dr. Clare, leaving Mr. and Mrs. Beaucaire the sole occupants of the parlour. The former had thrown himself along a large high-backed sofa, where he lay reading a political pamphlet; the latter was seated at the table, at needle-work, with her work-box open before her.

“ If what you are reading, Ralph, is not very

interesting," she said, "I wish you would lay it by, for I want to speak to you."

"What about?" was his reply, with, as it were, one eye on his wife and the other on his book, seemingly unwilling to repel the one or resign the other.

"About my brother," she cried. "He and his family were so kind to me—I am sure I ought to feel very grateful."

"Very grateful," repeated her husband, in the tone of a person giving the last word of something he is writing from dictation. Turning towards her, he rested on his elbow, propping his head on one hand, while the other, with the forefinger inserted between the pages he had been perusing, rested carelessly at his side.

"And you know," she continued, without raising her eyes from her work, "in the time I spent in their house, I had an opportunity of seeing a great deal of their circumstances."

"Their circumstances," echoed Mr. Beau-



caire, in his former tone ; but with a smile of increasing good humour, as he contemplated the beautiful face presented to him in profile, and shaded by bright brown hair.

“ Now, Ralph, you are mocking me, when I want you to be very attentive !”

“ Well, my dear, I *am* very attentive. I have never taken my eyes off you since you began speaking. I only wish you would return the compliment.”

She looked at him with a momentary smile, as she said, “ But I want you to be serious.”

“ As well as interesting,” he added. “ Well, proceed.”

“ Then, my dear, I am sorry to say, I discovered that my brother’s affairs are not as prosperous as they appear.”

“ Then he ought to make less appearance,” rejoined her husband.

“ Nay, I am sure he is not extravagant, but he has been unfortunate; things have gone wrong, and——”

"You wish I would help him," interrupted Mr. Beaucaire. "Why have you been so long coming to the point, as if I was a sword-fish and you were a crab?"

"Perhaps from the crab's motive—fear."

"That is a sentiment I did not think I could have inspired in *you*, Amelia," said Mr. Beaucaire, in a tone of slight reproachfulness. "Fear is for the guilty to feel, and for the tyrant to inflict; it has no business between us."

"I know," she cried, colouring and working very fast, "that you do not like my brother."

"I have never told you so; but since you have found it out, it were folly, and I will not be guilty of the falsehood, to deny it. Nevertheless, I would serve him, and the more especially since he has been of service to you. I fancy none could be more acceptable to him than a loan."

"It would not be a permanent one," she observed.

signed her work, and resumed her smile. Mr. Trevor had not the fine form or expressive face of Beaucaire, but he had an urbane good-nature, an unpresuming intelligence, that won universal good-will, it might almost be said gratitude. He was no flatterer, yet every one left his company with a feeling of self-satisfaction. The reverse of this was frequently the case with his friend, who was apt to overbear and unapt to forbear ; and when he did the latter, it was with so rigid an outline, that the appearance of effort neutralized the effect of his clemency or self-denial. Mrs. Beaucaire was perpetually sensible of inferiority in the society of her husband ; she had no such consciousness when conversing with Mr. Trevor, though the profounder man of the two, and though he never descended to mere small talk, which is administered to women, as porridge and potatoes are to peasants, not because they cannot discuss better food, but because no better is allowed them to discuss.

When supper was over, Mrs. Beaucaire retired, and the two gentlemen drew close to the fire to enjoy that social, unrestrained conversation which is the most precious privilege of friendship.

"Beaucaire," cried his friend, after they had run through a variety of topics, "you have a beautiful wife. I think you are hardly conscious enough of your good fortune."

"The deuce I am not?"

"No—you neglect her."

"What! for other women?"

"No again—but for business and books."

"Perhaps you are right. But what is mere beauty? I would much rather not speak to her at all than speak to her of that which she does not understand, and I cannot talk about what she does. You would not have me give up reading everything but her fair face? Besides, she has now a little one, so I may play the absent man with impunity—the father is always forgotten in the children."

" I deny that," said Mr. Trevor. " But were it so, I should little wonder. The mother sympathizes with her child entirely, with her husband but partially, perhaps not at all. If sympathy be, as I believe, a main source of happiness, how little we must know of it !"

" And how is this to be remedied ?" said Beaucaire.

" By educating women."

" Then those that will have rational wives must wait till the next generation, taking it for granted that your plan be adopted and successful. But what is to be done in the mean time ?"

" Educate our wives, such as they are."

Beaucaire threw himself back in his chair, and laughed heartily.

" Upon my soul, I wish, instead of talking like one, you were an old woman at the head of a school for wives, and Mrs. Beaucaire should become one of your pupils immediately. What

would become of all my schemes of business and ambition were I to turn teacher?"

"What will become of your schemes of happiness if you do not? The faults of the mother will find a fatal perpetuity in her children; and when her beauty flies, the rosy leaves of which conceal and excuse so many of the thorns that grow beneath them, you will feel yourself linked by necessity, not bound by gratitude or increased affection."

"Bachelors' wives! what perfect creatures are bachelors' wives!" exclaimed Beaucaire, as he renewed his glass of brandy and water. "I long to see you married, Trevor, that I may have the benefit of example as well as precept."

"Neither of which, my good fellow, will serve him that is resolved not to take them," rejoined Trevor. "Vice, extravagance, and dissipation have received more women from the hands of neglect than from any other cause. For my own part, I only wonder how they survive the change of atmosphere they experience

in passing from courtship to marriage! The first is like living at the Equator, the latter like living at the Pole."

"Here!" cried Beaucaire, with a mock-heroic manner, "here is to Mrs. Trevor that is to be; learned, luminous, lovely, and loving; for all these she must be, or books, back-boards, and birch-rods will be her portion from the time she says after the parson! And then the little Trevors! they must take the Mantuan bard with their mother's milk—swallow pap and Plato by spoonfuls. By Jupiter! I know the very woman to suit you—if you do not mind a devil, provided 'tis a clever one."

"I have never," said Trevor, smiling, "had any taste for demonology; and I must confess, I should not like to begin the study in the person of my wife. Yet, much as you and I differ on many points, so high an opinion do I entertain of your penetration, that no one's judgment would sooner bias me in favour of an object than yours."

Beaucaire rose on the instant, laid his hand on his heart, and made a profound bow.

"You are as mere a boy as ever you were, Ralph," said his friend; "and verify the remark that has been made, that the most acutely wise can be the most agreeably foolish. Why cannot you teach a little animation to that sweet statue of passive perfection—your wife?"

"I was going to speak to you about a wife of your own, and here you are again vapouring about mine!" said Beaucaire. "By Jove! I believe you want to make me jealous. I have often wondered," he added, in a graver tone, "at the vast variety of human character, and I in some measure account for it from the contrariety always existing between husband and wife. If any angel of concord managed these matters, you, Mr. Moderation, would have had my Amelia—I should have been yokefellow to Agnes Lennox, whom I am recommending to you. When children, she and I were as sister and brother; and unless wedlock, widowhood,



and the West Indies have much altered her, she is as witty, worthy, and winsome a creature as ever was created."

"Are you speaking of a daughter of Dr. Clare?"

"Yes; but do not let that alarm you—she is not like *him*. Could I fancy anything so like a mummy doing a merry trick, I could believe he ran away with a gipsy when he married the mother of Agnes. Mrs. Lennox is all archness, elegance, and animation—dark as an Asiatic, agile as an antelope—face expressive, not handsome, excepting the eyes and teeth; they are warm as the sun of Italy, white as the snows of Russia; she is five-and-twenty years of age, and has five thousand pounds. This is the whole lot: shall I say going, going,—gone?"

"I would that *I* could say gained," replied Trevor; "only that I know you are like Christie, the auctioneer, who made a man buy in his own estate, he was so delighted by the description, I should be over head and ears in

love without waiting to see the lady. But what have I to offer in return for such a prize?"

"O, leave me alone for crying you up to Mrs. Lennox!" said Beaucaire. "I should make an admirable love-broker."

"A much better bedlamite!" exclaimed Mr. Coverley, entering the room. "Mr. Trevor," he continued, as he shook hands with that gentleman, "you are a sober man, yet I always perceive that fellow gets intoxicated in your company."

"My dear sir," replied Trevor, as he gave his chair to the old man, and drew another for himself, "few things in this world have given me more pleasure than finding Beaucaire's feelings still so fresh. It is not often that college companions meet in after life so little changed as we have; for I, as he can testify, was always one of the sad coloured tribe, that serve for little else than to afford contrasts to their brighter brethren."

"I have been thinking, my dear uncle," said

Beaucaire, "that as Trevor has a thriving business and a large house, he must take unto himself a wife."

"I look upon that as more his concern than yours, Mr. Malapert," said Mr. Coverley.

"Why, I fear," rejoined Ralph, "that he is somewhat like the Saxons of Charles the Twelfth's time,—that is, he deliberates to-day about what he should have done yesterday. Thus will he meditate upon matrimony so long, that, just as Hymen arrests him, Time will step in, and refuse to let him out upon bail long enough to get married."

"Ay, ay, Mr. Trevor," exclaimed the bachelor, "you are right!—look before you leap. In my young days you might now and then meet with a woman that, with good looking after, might make a tolerable wife; but they have grown scarcer and scarcer, like everything else that is good, and now there is not one in a thousand worth the ring that you wed them with."

“ If the world is to go on deteriorating at this rate,” said Trevor, “ what is to become of your descendants ? ”

“ O ! all set out in life with a very comfortable share of satisfaction with the world as it is,” said Beaucaire. “ Youth is easily pleased, as age is soon displeased ; so that the rising race will do much what we all are doing.”

“ Whether or not,” said Mr. Coverley, “ as long as the world lasts, the women will make a sure fight of it : the baggages are all like Bonaparte,—whenever they strike, they aim at the heart.”

“ Let me apprise you, my dear sir,” said Beaucaire, “ that this is a true knight—one of the few flowers of chivalry left to these degenerate days. Armed cap-à-pie, as he is in the cause of love and the ladies, ought he to lack a lady-love ? ”

“ I carry no lance, but I have what is a better weapon—logic, which I am willing to wield in their behalf,” said Trevor. “ There is as noble

metal in the breast of woman as in man, were it brought to the same proof. Sarah Siddons and Johanna Baillie are giving evidence of powers of which the best brains of our beloved Oxford might be proud. In moral attributes, it were perhaps for man's credit not to try his strength against woman—ay, even in that one which we would] especially appropriate—courage. Marie Antoinette suffered death with more fortitude than her husband ; she was collected enough to beg the executioner's pardon for treading on his toe. Madame Roland and Charlotte Corday died [as might “ the noblest Roman of them all,” while the miscreant monster Robespierre could not redeem the manhood he disgraced by meeting death otherwise than as a dog. Isabelle of Castile supported Columbus when her husband would have denied him encouragement.”

“ If you go to France for your examples of female excellence,” exclaimed Mr. Coverley, frowning, “ you are easily satisfied.”

The old man partook largely of the strong

national prejudice at that time existing and fostered against France. Beaucaire adroitly directed the storm of prejudice into another channel, by exclaiming,

"No, no ! Trevor shall go into Suffolk for a wife. What say you to my fair cousin Peter for him ?"

"Fair cousin ?—Peter ?" repeated Trevor.

"Are you speaking of a lady ?"

"At least," sharply replied Mr. Coverley, "he is speaking of a woman—a slip from a parasitical plant, that once grew at my side, and therefore wanted to climb upon me, and make me support her branches whether I would or not. But I flung off her fruit, which was as sour and unsightly as Scotch grapes, and grafted a scion of a better tree on the old stem."

The old man's countenance brightened as he spoke, and he kindly laid his hand on Beaucaire's shoulder.

"I think *I* am likely to play the parasite now !" said Ralph : "for my wedded vine has

long been clinging to you, and now *she* is showing Scotch grapes too."

"Now, out upon this fellow!" exclaimed Trevor, whose warm heart sympathized in the evident depth of attachment existing between Beaucaire and his uncle. "England boasts no fairer woman than his wife, and, if report speaks true, no finer boy than his son; and yet it is thus disparagingly he speaks of them."

"'Tis a trick to hide his pride," said Mr. Coverley. "I am the honestest fool of the two, for I proclaim mine. I did once fear that my fortune would have wanted heirs of his body; but the body of no other's heir would have been the better for it. No, no! they thought to 'rob Peter to pay Paul,' but Peter would see them hanged first."

Beaucaire laughed vociferously; this tribute the old man's wit confirmed his good humour. He joined, in deep double base, the laugh he had excited; and Trevor, in common sympathy, added a sort of falsetto to the merriment; and, as it was past midnight, the friends separated.

## CHAPTER IV.

THE next morning Mr. Coverley, accompanied by Dr. Clare, set out for Suffolk. The weather was remarkably fine, and the journey promised to be pleasant; but at the very outset Mr. Coverley contrived to chafe himself into an ill humour, which did not wear off as they approached localities pregnant with recollections that fed his spleen. To an unhappy ingenuity in discovering the dark side of character, he added an interminable memory for all injuries or offences; which, together with habits of selfishness, ripened by age, and of suspicion gathered in the world, enabled him to feed the fermentations into which he so frequently threw himself.

“No!” he exclaimed, in a tone in which Demosthenes might have addressed the waves;



"the tears of Kitty Crocodile, my canting sister, never moved me one jot from that hour to this."

"What hour?" said Dr. Clare, waking up from a pleasant reverie.

"The hour that Maria died," resumed Mr. Coverley. "Now, to give the whole family a convincing proof of my intentions now and for ever, to show them how perfectly I keep the ghastly memory of the past, I shall buy or build a place, and proclaim Ralph's boy my heir. Maria did not call her boy Peter—Ralph does not call his boy Peter—no one Peters me but the Judases that want to pillage me. But I have balked them, Ralph has balked them, and this boy shall balk them!"

While these words were uttering, Mr. Coverley tore the flap of his coat from Dr. Clare, who had, unintentionally and unconsciously, seated himself upon it; and then the irascible old man drew on his gloves as if they were gauntlets, and he going out to do battle.

Dr. Clare, whose gentle nature and philosophic mind were alike opposed to the feelings that cherish resentments and generate disgusts, sat back in the carriage, reflecting on the train of circumstances already prepared to influence the fate and character of little Beaucaire. The spirit that of old kept alive hereditary feuds, armed rival clansmen and their hostile chiefs against each other, was alive in the breast of Mr. Coverley ; and, though softened and qualified, it also animated his nephew. Directly and indirectly this influence would act on the germinating spirit of the child, amalgamate with the first elements of thought and feeling, and, if not met by a strong counteraction, bias his mind to vindictiveness.

“ Clare, this boy’s baptismal festival shall be held at this projected place,” resumed Mr. Coverley. “ Then you will see how the hypocrites will come, with their two faces under a hood. I know them ; both the one they will show, and the one they won’t ; and I’ll unhood them.”

“I should be very happy,” said Dr. Clare, endeavouring to turn the current of conversation, “to secure you as a neighbour. There is an estate on sale very near me. It will, I think, just meet your views. A short stay at Bees-home will enable you to see how you like the neighbourhood.”

“I care nothing about neighbourhood,” retorted the old man. “But I will candidly tell you, if I cannot satisfy my feelings of spite by finding a suitable place near Bungay, I will consult my feelings of friendship, and take this place near Bramford. And a thought has just struck me, that inclines me very much to the latter.—I believe it is what poor Maria would have wished.”

Dr. Clare betrayed some little emotion, but habits of severe self-control soon enabled him to conquer it. Among the discoveries Mr. Coverley made, in looking over his deceased sister's papers, was, that Dr. Clare had loved and sought her, and she had left a record of her

regard and esteem for him, though her heart, already preoccupied, could not answer his passion. To this discovery Dr. Clare was indebted to a large accession of friendship from Mr. Coverley; and it accounted for the decided preference he evinced for one in most respects so diametrically opposed to him.

“ You will always, Clare,” continued his friend, “ feel a strong interest in Maria’s children. I think, so high was the estimation in which she held you, it would have been her wish to have placed them near you. The least confirmation on this point would bring me to decision, and I would be your neighbour to-morrow.”

“ Then I will confess that which, uncalled for, had never been revealed,” replied the Doctor—“ that death has not diminished the deep interest I feel in all relating to Maria. Could she speak from her grave, it would be to say, ‘ Place not my children amid jealousy, envy, and contention ; place them with the gentle, the liberal,

the social ; for such as they are among, such they will become.' She would certainly have preferred their being among those from whom she met love—towards whom she felt regard, than among those to whom she owed no gratitude and could feel no esteem."

"You're right!" exclaimed Mr. Coverley, grasping his friend's hand. "The point's settled at once."

Mrs. Lennox had been apprized, by letter, when to expect her father and his guest, and sat waiting in the library to receive them. Daylight died away, candles were brought, shutters closed, curtains let down, and at length the travellers arrived. As Agnes sprung to meet her father, short as their separation had been, her heart seemed to gush with delight : nor was Mr. Coverley coldly welcomed ; for he was associated with the recollections of her childhood. Agnes conducted them to the drawing-room, where tea, coffee, toast, broiled ham, dried salmon, and many other things equally accept-

able to the appetized traveller was prepared, not forgetting a little brandy, with which Mr. Coverley gladly qualified his hyson.

Dr. Clare soon turned the conversation to the pleasurable prospect of their friends residing near them. Agnes hailed the idea with delight, reminded her guest that she and Ralph Beaucaire used to be playmates, and avowed her own feelings to be so unaltered, that she could ramble about with him as gaily and giddily as ever.

"But," she continued, "I must not even hint such an idea, lest I should fright propriety, which is, in England, manners, morals, and religion. I must learn to be precise and pretty behaved, and give up all my crazy ways, if I would win favour with my country people."

"They will afford you many valuable examples, my dear Agnes," said her father. "Whatever is superabundant must submit to suppression, if not for the sake of the individual, for the sake of others."

“ I know it,” she replied, “ and I am becoming quite a new creature ; patient, tolerant, and rational. Yet I must still confess I am not quite reconciled to see people as passionless as if they were made of pewter.”

“ I’ll tell you what, my little Agnes, as I used to call you some fifteen or twenty years ago,” said Mr. Coverley, “ you are like spiced cake, very well now and then ; but for everyday fare, we want something more solid and simple. Norfolk dumplings do best. Yes, yes ! the majority must be Norfolk dumplings.”

Agnes laughed ; she was pleased with the homely metaphor.

“ I see,” she cried, “ you entertain the universal opinion regarding me. Now really, my dear sir, I am as much of a Norfolk dumpling as any one, if by that you typify solidity and consistency.”

“ Ay, ay,” he rejoined, laughing ; “ then it is those dumplings I have heard of, into which some wag had introduced quicksilver ; and when

the old cook thought they were quietly reposing in the pot, behold they had gone up the chimney."

Even Dr. Clare joined in audible laughter; while Mr. Coverley, infinitely pleased with his own wit, continued to say, "I know you—I know you." And if he did not, like Jove, shake ambrosial curls, he disturbed some powdered ones of the wig he still pertinaciously wore.

"I will not attempt to contradict you," said Agnes, "because I would avoid egotism, the most unamiable, but, perhaps, most universal characteristic of the human species."

"I believe," cried Mr. Coverley, "you have the family mania—like your father, always studying character."

"It is, and has been my chief pleasure," she replied, "but merely in the idle spirit of speculative curiosity; it is with *him* a pursuit, followed in the benevolent spirit of philosophic inquiry."



"Then you are not a professor, but a student?" said Mr. Coverley.

"No more. I may say, with the Duchess of Marlborough, 'My books are men.' I dare not, like her, add, 'I read them currently;' but at least I endeavour to do so."

"You do, do you?" exclaimed Mr. Coverley, seized with a sudden surprise, if not horror, that a woman should take up the microscope of inquiry to the character of man, though he has done the like so frequently in aid of his dialectic doctrines about women. "And, pray, what has been the result of your intrusive, not to say impertinent and improper inquiry?"

"I do not know that I dare tell you," she rejoined, with a smile. "I certainly should not if we were in Constantinople, and you were grand sultan."

"An evasion!" he cried, exultingly. "You are convinced that our supremacy is based on our superiority; but, with true female disingenuousness, you elude a question you cannot deny."

Mr. Coverley's complacency was gone, and he sat looking fierce defiance. Agnes grew animated, but not angry.

"Had I discovered that superiority, I should have bowed to it," she cried; "for I was trained to be a trifler, pleased to transfer responsibility, and depend on anything rather than myself."

Her father sighed. Agnes was too much engrossed with her argument to notice the circumstance; perhaps, at the moment, she was hardly conscious of the Doctor's presence.

"I have seen some of you more learned, more scientific," she resumed, "most of you more prompt and energetic. The first advantage is accounted for by your having more and better scholastic instruction; the latter by your being called into more active exercise in the real scenes of life. In the common prints of character I have perceived little difference: are you, for instance, less vain? 'I appeal to Cæsar, and make him at once both judge and party.' While in all the rarer virtues, (of the

few distinguished by *them*), the majority have been women. In the trials and temptations of life, are you as strong? Let the sick-bed of the male invalid, let the career of debauched sons, husbands, and fathers reply to you."

"Madam," said Mr. Coverley, "custom, opinion, and prescription keep your sex within the pale of a stricter morality; but that argues nothing in your favour. I believe with Pope, that

Every woman is at heart a rake.

Be that as it may, I care not if I concede the point of superiority in *piety* and *morals*: certainly, now I come to consider, you *do* very commonly exhibit patience under pain, fortitude under distress, and forbearance under injury. This, I suppose, you call moral strength, but it has nothing to do with mental strength."

"I beg your pardon," gently interrupted Dr. Clare.

"Now, Clare, can't you let me play my

game my own way? You know I detest interference."

"It is strange," said Agnes, as she smiled with extenuating sweetness on her father, in atonement for Mr. Coverley's rudeness. "It is strange, how little jealous you show yourselves of the rivalry of goodness, though so very tenacious of that of greatness. Perhaps, we ought to regard it as an evidence of your liberality, (which, by the by, is somewhat like fairy-gifts, more talked of than seen). While you aim at securing for yourselves only temporal advantage, you permit us precedence, nay, if we like it, appropriation of all such as are spiritual; and thus, on the point of morals, even you and I are not at issue."

"I will ask you one question, Mrs. Lennox."

"Ten thousand if you like, my dear sir."

"Well then, madam, answer me; was a woman's head ever seen that contained an equal weight or quantity of brain as a man's?"

"Perhaps not; but before you draw any

inference in your own favour from that circumstance, let it be established, that the *quality* of the mind depends on the *quantity* of the brain. The most perfect physical beauty is consistent with a small frame, why not the most perfect mental beauty with a small brain? Perhaps, too, a *post mortem* examination of distinguished brains might not have tended to confirm your assumption. No key has yet been discovered to the secrets of the palace of thought. What is it we yet know of the connexion of mind and matter? Dissection sits poring over the organ, like an unlettered man over the pages of a Greek author; he knows, from report and analogy, that what he gazes on is a written language, but of the spirit, that knowledge would call from it, he is as unconscious as the boards that bind the book. All hitherto advanced has been speculations, that amuse and interest, but do little towards satisfying the rational enquirer. Cuvier favours the notion, that superior capacity is associated with a superior sized cranium;

the angle of which diminishes from the European down to the lowest order of animals. Let us put the latter out of the question:—we deny them reason, they, therefore, make nothing in the argument, and let us stop at the negro. What cultivation has the latter received to allow us a proper test that his diminutive head may not shrine vast powers? A long course of savage life and civilized debasement has left unimproved in the first case, and vitiated in the second, his hereditary character, in the same manner existing evils stunt and injure his individual one;—then, forsooth, we go and measure his forehead, and triumphantly declare he is inferior to his oppressor.”

“But, madam, do you think that Nature would, in your behalf, break an immutable law? Has she not given superiority to the male in every species of animal?”

“She has departed from this alleged rule in one instance in our favour,” said Mrs. Lennox.

“ What is that ? ”

“ Beauty. In all but the human species beauty is on the male side ; the bird has brighter plumage, the beast a nobler form.”

“ And there are many that believe the rule holds also in humanity,” said Mr. Coverley ; “ and that you are indebted to gallantry for the popular award in your favour. I am content, however, in this instance, to allow equality.”

“ Thank you, my dear sir, you animate me to proceed : from even you I have gained acknowledgment of superiority in morals, and equality in beauty. I think I ought to be content, and not press my victory further at present ; but as you seem to like analogies, I will merely remark, that in the lower animals the males are not the superior in instinct, scarcely in courage, certainly not when the female is a mother. Among insects, it is the female builds the nest, often a masterpiece of ingenuity. Physical strength is a male supe-

riority that holds throughout the *whole* chain of life, and that, and that only, I concede you. What Lord Littleton said of Eloise might be said of many of her sex, ‘ Had her reading not been confined to foolish legends, she would have surpassed any man of her age.’”

“ Zounds, madam !” cried Mr. Coverley with uncontrollable anger, “ Do you mean to contravene St. Paul, and deny the Scriptures ?”

“ The old stronghold, into which,” exclaimed Agnes, “ the baffled controversialist retreats ; whence he silences those he cannot answer, and assails their belief when he cannot attack their understanding. And are you really going to march out Adam, and the Apostles, with King Ahasuerus at their head, against me ? As to the first witness, let me examine his character before I admit his evidence. He, when he erred, yielded to an inferior power ; for it was the spirit that even God could not conquer that tempted Eve, while only a mere



mortal solicited Adam ; and when he was questioned as to his disobedience, how readily he cried out—‘ The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, *she* gave me of the tree, and I did eat.’ As he greedily partook the fruit he might have generously shared the fault ; how like dutiful sons you have followed the example of your father ever since. From the co-partnership of error and folly you never shrink ; but as for the penalty, you leave to woman the full benefit of *that*. No, no ; as to your great prototype, Adam, I’ll none of him.”

“ But the Apostles, madam !”

“ They were,” said Agnes, “ men, and though filled with the divine doctrine of their great Master, they could not transmit it without giving it a tinge from the earthly vessel through which it passed. As for him, who reigned from ‘ India unto Æthiopia,’ he proves to me how little change time, clime, and government have affected in men. You will say, or

in women either, when I tell you that, under like circumstances, it is highly probable I should act like the rebellious Vashti. Every sect, my dear Mr. Coverley, have their own interpretation of Scripture, why not every individual? I could show you some you would find it easier to frown at than refute. The world may yet see a translation of the Scriptures by a woman, who may detect more mis-translations than even Mr. Bellamy. It will be interesting, if not instructive, to collate the old and new translation."

"Transversion, as regards the latter, you mean," cried Mr. Coverley. "I suppose you will next propose to fit up your own discovery ships, traverse the ocean, and come home and claim the government reward for having attained the highest degrees of north latitude and west longitude?"

"No;" said Agnes, laughing, "it is not likely that any of us will emulate Commodore Byron or Captain Cooke; and yet, on the

ocean of truth, and in the degrees of mental polarity, we may prove as daring voyagers, and reach as high a latitude as any of our brothers. I think it might serve to abate some of your presumption to recollect, that the discovery of the most important facts have been the effect of accident, rather than sagacity."

"How comes it that none of these fortunate chances ever have fallen to you?" said Mr. Coverley.

"Ask the mountebank why, having strength and sinews like the miner, he never found a diamond? He will answer, because it is his allotment to trifle on the surface, not dig into the depths of the earth. Throughout society," continued Agnes, speaking with increased energy, "to the fancied interests of a part, the real interests of the greater portion, or more properly speaking, of the whole, are sacrificed. The false views that affect the classes, affect the sexes. You will not be less wise when we become more so; but so ignorantly, so selfishly

averse are men to equalization, that they would sooner stand alone at a medium elevation, than together at the highest point. They cannot expand their hearts, so as to embrace a universal feeling, and perceive that that which adds to the happiness and intelligence of the whole, must give increase of advantages to every individual part."

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## CHAPTER V.

THE estate, of which Dr. Clare designed his friend should become the purchaser, was situated at Rushmere. It was the property of a ruined fox-hunter, of the name of Melburn, who, on the wreck of a once considerable fortune, was preparing to emigrate with his family to North America. This event was a serious affliction to Agnes, who lost, in Mrs. Melburn, one of her earliest and dearest friends. This unfortunate lady was one of those unobtrusive and excellent beings of whom the unsuspecting world possesses many. Her economy protracted, and ultimately retrieved the ruin of a profligate husband. Her's had been the uncheered, unalleviated course of self-denial and suffering; his the riotous, reckless career of self-gratification and gross indulgence. She was reputed

to be penurious, because the scantiness of the means allowed her, the necessity of supporting appearance, and the determination to educate her children, compelled her to frugal retirement and simple living: he was reputed to be generous, because he gave premiums to the profligate, and paid high for pleasure. The sensualist rarely knows a liberal feeling—seldom does a generous act.; he grudges a guinea to a just claim, in proportion to the greedy joy he has in lavishing it on a vile one. The wife, whose peace he has wrecked, and whose fortune he has ruined, appeals in vain against the wanton and the wine-seller, that first beggar and then abandon him. When he has reached this consummation he falls back on home—on the woman whose virtue “was not strengthened by reward, only because it was considered too firm to be shaken by neglect.”

“I shall proceed to London,” cried Melburn, one morning to his wife; “you must prepare immediately to follow me, with the children.”

Shark has my instruction to sell this place directly."

Mrs. Melburn turned pale. She had long known the futility of expostulation. When thwarted or opposed, Melburn, brutalized as he had become, was capable of giving way to the grossest abuse, regardless whose feelings he outraged so that he relieved his own. The secret canker of a reproaching conscience was ever at work in his breast; the reproof to which he would listen from none breathing, *that* monitor uttered and he was compelled to hear. It served, however, no purpose but to keep him in an ignitable state; and thus, on the slightest pretext, he vented in fury upon others, the rage really burning against himself.

In the secret chambers of his heart, however, Melburn knew his own baseness and cowardice. He knew he often offered insult where he was safe from resentment—inflicted the cruelest wrongs where he owed the fondest gratitude. Woman, as an abused wife and a mother, is

placed in a most defenceless position. Can she appeal against her husband? Against the father of her children? And to whom is she to appeal? To the world, that will stand by and wonder, till the victim is sacrificed, then cry shame, and turn away to mark some new matter of marvel and misery.

"I shall wish to remain to the last moment," at length observed Mrs. Melburn. "For, unless you purpose to return, much will devolve on me."

"I shall not return," he cried, doggedly.

"How then am I to act," she asked? "What do I take to London with me?"

"Nothing."

"All then is involved in the universal wreck!" she exclaimed, struggling with her emotion.

"All!" he replied: "I shall proceed directly to the New World."

"It will be no harm to wish that it may be to find new ways," ejaculated his wife. "God



help me, and give me strength to meet the trials I see before me."

"I expected this," he cried, eager but ashamed to vent the rage already swelling in his breast.

"Where shall I address to you in London?" she asked, without noticing his taunt.

"At my mother's—I may not be there, but you'll hear of me there; and thither you may proceed when you leave this place."

"It is rare of late," cried his wife, "that I am guilty of the fallacy of advising you, I will, however, hazard one word—go not to your mother's."

"And why not?"

"Our visit, under present circumstances, can only bring to her distress and discomfort."

"Well, and who has a better right to put up with that than she has?" he retorted.

"Ask your own heart that. If she owes you anything for filial attentions paid to the infirmities of her age, or her character as your mother;

for soothing administered to her sorrows, or in recompence of her sufferings?—go and tax her tenderness; but if, merely because she is your mother, you deem you have the right to add, as ere now, to her misfortunes, forego it.”

Starting from his chair, he dashed it to the floor, as he uttered a tirade that set common sense as well as common feeling at defiance. Notwithstanding this gusty ebullition, Melburn stood in awe of the mind of his wife. He felt that he played the puppet before her calm, well-judging reason; his passion subsided, and after a pause of some duration, he entered into such a detail of his affairs as he deemed necessary, but which the fear of exposing his profligacy rendered disjointed and obscure. Gradually his tone and manner became civil, even conciliating, and he concluded by some constrained expressions of affection.

These changes of his humour acted on the nerves, not on the feelings of Mrs. Melburn; she now lived for the duties, but for the affec-

tions of conjugal life no longer. She regarded Melburn as a generous mariner does a wreck, which he takes in tow of his good ship, unwilling to leave the crazy and dismasted hull to the mercy of the waves. Acting on principle, she sustained the moral wreck attached to her—she regarded him with pity, treated him with forbearance ; but the endearments of tenderness, the enthusiasm of love, which had lived long beyond his deserving, were extinguished for ever.

Humbled by misfortune, the only thing that humbles the base, Melburn at last saw the expediency of adopting the counsel of his wife, and they parted : he to proceed to London, to devote the brief term allotted him to licence ; she to remain at Rushmere, dispose of everything to the best advantage, and make what reserve she could from the general wreck.

On this occasion she consulted her old friend, Dr. Clare, and found him prompt and efficient. Some of the family pictures, some portion of

the plate, and a few relics and records of the past, she committed to his keeping.

"*I may never come back to claim them,*" she cried, "*but my children may.*"

Till she uttered these words, none, by her outward bearing, could have guessed she suffered. Agnes, too much the creature of impulse, regarded her with the homage superiority always commands from merit; for some approximation is essential to a true appreciation of excellence.

"*They say,*" exclaimed Agnes, one day, as Mrs. Melburn disclaimed her praise, "*that genius is ever a secret to itself. So I believe are all the higher powers of humanity; while those in the medium, or below it, feel and insist on their own value; the purest hearts and most powerful minds live on, like the ocean, to which they may be compared, unconscious how pure, how powerful they are. I have witnessed but one instance before of fortitude like yours—that too in a woman—she suffered*

as much from negative as you from positive vices. O! there is no home so wretched as the miser's."

"Except the spendthrift's," said Mrs. Melburn. "All extremes reach the same point. No grossly dissipated man was ever just or generous; lavish he may be among those that pay him back the interest of servile flattery and vile enjoyment. Home is as insipid to him as a squeezed orange; if any property remains in the exhausted rind, it is bitterness, and he attributes, never appropriates the faults that have made it such."

"I see, I see," cried Agnes, "how you have suffered; but have you not been wanting in moral courage not to break from such a fate?"

"It's a higher courage to endure it," said Mrs. Melburn, calmly.

"It is a severer effort," rejoined Agnes. "And if the consciousness of suffering and suffering well is enough, verily you have your reward. But I question whether submission to

individual wrong is not general injury. Female virtue is said to be the cement of society. What does it cement if male virtue be wanting? Crumbling, corrupt, unworthy fragments, which owe their support to strength they do not acknowledge, and sympathy they do not deserve: clinging to it without gratitude, and corrupting it without remorse."

Mrs. Melburn sighed deeply, and resting her elbow on the table, shaded her face with her hand.

"The reproach to the Athenians that Demosthenes made regarding Philip, applies to woman regarding man," continued Agnes. "It is not to his own strength he owes his elevation, but to our supineness—the timidity that acquiesces in receiving wrongs—the supineness that shrinks from asserting rights. How has any particle of human liberty been gained? By resistance. When endurance has been goaded to the last gasp, it has wrenched power from the reluctant hand of oppression."

“ And played tyrant in turn,” added Mrs. Melburn. “ For that which is extorted from fear by violence there is no security. The same means used to gain, is necessary to guard the acquisition. What is such a state of existence? Something like the warfare of the wolf and the sheep-dog. I do not urge this to check the expression of your sentiments—no, proclaim them everywhere; for it is the wind of opinion sets the vane of reform. All that is wanting, is for men to think justly, and to think alike; but while institutions exist it is wiser to make the best of conformity, than to risk outraging them.”

“ Thus it is,” exclaimed Agnes, “ that change is so slow, and abuse so certain—but pardon my interrupting you.”

“ I am a wife and mother, Agnes,” resumed her friend; “ in both characters my duties are unalienable; that others are defaulters does not exonerate me. But, alas, I can no longer discharge my duties by pursuing the fair and open

path. Oppression has produced its usual consequences. He that does not deserve to be trusted must submit to be deceived. I am the anonymous author of many works, the proceeds of which I could only appropriate by concealing them. During my exile, Agnes, will you act as my agent; and should a necessity of acknowledgment of authorship arise, claim my works, and let me appear the object of your bounty? No such contingency may ever occur, but my anxious mind seeks to provide against every possibility."

"O! Magdalene, you can feel yourself at the mercy of an unprincipled profligate—know yourself without the right of independently exercising your superior powers—see yourself without refuge from abuse and injustice! and to all this you advocate conformity."

"You are going again into the general argument," said Mrs. Melburn. "If our institutions admit of wrongs, have not laws been enacted to



redress them: I might, you know, have appealed to those laws."

"Laws!" contemptuously exclaimed Agnes. "To the dowered and aristocratic dame alimony may be allowed, if she live through the protracted period of the suit by which she seeks it; but to all others law only adds insult to injury—mortification to misfortune. No account is or can be taken of moral injuries by law; and to make a mere lawyer understand them is *impossible*. No, no, keep to the ambuscade of deception, rather than the array of *legal* justice. How do we change the forms of iniquity and flatter ourselves we have departed from unrighteousness! How do all good Protestants lift up their hands and eyes at the practice of selling indulgences, once a lucrative branch of traffic to holy mother Church. What is the power of compromise by money permitted at the present day? The offender that can put his hand in his pocket walks off with im-

punity ; he that cannot goes to prison. Name not to me law of any *kind* in any *case* ; the day will be when men will look back upon it as they do now on sorcery and witchcraft, in spite of all that its apologists, with Blackstone at the head of them, can say in its defence."

" A staunch reformer was spoiled, my dear Agnes, when you were put into petticoats. Now that you have pronounced your philippic, to return to my affairs, do you accede to my request ?"

" Cheerfully ; but my father would be, I think, the better agent, and suffer me to be your banker till ——"

" There is no occasion, my dear Agnes ; and were there, I would decline to take up the load of dependence, so long as I had strength to try the effects of industry and endurance. I have a secret treasure of three hundred pounds, and am richer than when we possessed three thousand a-year, of which I never had the uncontrolled expenditure of a shilling. Amid all my

griefs, I have had one blessing, I have been permitted to be the sole educator of my children ; that trust is now less likely than ever to be taken from me, to that I dedicate my life, my strength. Already my children appear, to me, full of promise—already they are my friends, my companions. Oh, how much beauty there is in the simplicity of childhood ! Instead of teaching as we do, we ought to learn from it. Children must be made parties to their education—beings acted *with*, not merely acted *on*.”

“ But alas ! when you have done all, Magdalene, you must give these finely-moulded creatures to a world in which they shall find no mates.”

“ Say not so,” replied Mrs. Melburn, “ I am not singular among mothers. I have taken my plan of education from an anecdote I once heard related of the ancient inhabitants of Minorca. They possessed great skill in throwing. In order to acquire it they practised from

the earliest age, the little children's breakfasts were suspended every morning from a tree, and they could only obtain them by bringing them down with a stone thrown from a sling. Here was daily practice under the stimulant of 'natural motive. Teach anything on this principle, it will defy forgetfulness, and, if it fades, it is easily revived again. My boys, like Shakespeare, will 'have little Latin and less Greek,' but they shall have the power of self-control, of self-sacrifice,—lessons never taught to children, and which they cannot gain intuitively."

"And your girls?" said Agnes.

"I shall make no difference in the education of my boys and girls: they shall both have the same mental and bodily exercise, the liberty of free air and free inquiry. I will teach them to examine everything, to trace effects to their causes, compounds to their constituents—to take nothing for granted. The same attention and examination a child is accustomed to bestow on a picture, it will, as an adult, bestow on

the persons it meets in the intercourse of life ; the same power of inquiry and analysis it is accustomed to exercise on objects abroad or at home, in the fields or at the fire-side, it will, as an adult, exercise on the affairs of life. Thus even though, as you fear, they meet no worthy mates, they have a chance, by possessing penetration, forethought, and power of calculation, escape being duped by unworthy ones."

" Your children will have too much reason," said Agnes.

" Can that be possible ?"

" Yes ; as society is constituted, I think, with Dean Swift, ' those are happiest that are best deceived.' The most exquisite felicity owes its chief charm to imagination. There is little real happiness in the world, because there are so few things of intrinsic value ; everything needs the gilding of the possessor's fancy. Thus when things become tangible, the ideal brilliancy they wore, while looked on through the prism of imagination, vanishes. Now, your

children, taught to be content only with facts, will resign the spells of fancy."

"Your doctrine is at once mischievous and fallacious," said Mrs. Melburn. "You condemn my politic acquiescence with conventional institutions from which I cannot escape. What is your irrational submission to a moral delusion from which you can? If, as Dean Swift says, 'those are happiest that are best deceived,' to secure that happiness, there must be uniformity and continuity in the deception. When was that ever the case? The deceived will be the undeceived, as surely as the sleeper will awake. In proportion as he will be happy in the first case, he will be wretched in the last. Then as to your idea, that, by cultivating the faculty of reason, I shall annul that of imagination; in my opinion perspicuity of reason, and a large acquaintance with facts, give strength to all the powers of genius, keeping him on his eagle flight with sun-fixed eyes, while, wanting them, he takes only uncertain impulsive excursions,

and falls again bewildered with immensity of space and intensity of light.

“ But I have no wish to see my children creatures of extraordinary genius. Such are, in a great measure, solitary; they think *for*, not *with* mankind, and neither feel nor diffuse the happiness of minds of less calibre.”

“ They may not personally diffuse as much,” said Agnes, “ but certainly they feel more than those of the ordinary race of men. Sir Isaac Newton, for instance,—he forgot in his celestial studies all sublunary wants.”

“ But man is of a mixed nature,” said Mrs. Melburn; “ from the abstraction of study he must awaken to share with his less-gifted fellow-beings the wants and wishes common to all. If then he cannot reciprocate such sympathies or excite them, as a man he is not happy, whatever he may be as a philosopher; and when we subtract from life the portion that must necessarily be passed in domestic and social intercourse, you leave him at best but a frac-

tion of felicity in the mental scale, with a large superbalance of infelicity in the moral one."

Just as Mrs. Melburn ceased speaking, the room door was gently opened, a tall striking woman appeared, but instantly vanished again.

"Hagar," cried Mrs. Melburn, "you may come in." Hagar did not answer or return.

"That is the poor creature that was found in the Hermitage in the park a few weeks ago?" said Agnes.

"It is," replied her friend.

"Now that her health is restored, has she given you no account of who she is, or whence she comes?"

"The account she has given me is a strange, and yet a simple one. As she regained strength, I made the inquiries you mention. I asked if she had not friends to whom she would desire to be restored. She fell on her knees, and entreated me to let her remain with me while she lived. 'Call me Hagar,' she cried, 'and



let me be your handmaid.' Turning to a Bible, that lay on the table, and opening it at the Book of Genesis, she read to me the verses containing the more melancholy part of her namesake's history, told me it was hers, and entreated me to question her no farther. I never have, I never shall. Brief as our acquaintance has been, I am disposed to regard her with affection and admiration, and the children are fond of her to excess. She sits among them with all their simplicity, and more than my intelligence."

"The former is an uncommon qualification for one of her nation," said Agnes, "for I fancy she is a daughter of Israel."

"Yes," said Mrs. Melburn, "evidently so; I have ever seen much to admire in her people—their patience, their humility, their intelligence, and Hagar has confirmed all my prepossessions. I shall take her with me to America; and I could almost regard it as an interposition of

Providence in my favour, the having guided hither one so capable to assist, so calculated to attach me."

"Does she not express any feeling of regret at the prospect of leaving England?" asked Agnes.

"Tis difficult to tell what she feels," replied Magdalene. "She has evidently ~~some~~ deep and settled sorrow; but she has a beautiful spirit of resignation, and a nature all gentleness and sympathy. I feel she will be to me as a sister."

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## CHAPTER VI.

Six months elapsed, and the alterations and improvements at Rushmere were completed. Mr. Coverley called the place Vex'em Park ; and there, as the autumn commenced, Mrs. Beaucaire arrived with a numerous cavalcade of friends, if such a term may be applied to the summer flies that swarm around the successful.

The mansion had been considerably enlarged, and the establishment arranged upon a scale of expense, that gave evidence that Mr. Coverley's fortune, large as it was presumed to be, was infinitely greater than had been imagined.

Mrs. Beaucaire walked through the splendid apartments with a triumphant feeling that dissipated the tameness of her hitherto habitual manner. Those that have no internal source of

elevation are peculiarly accessible to the pride of adscititious circumstances; it often effects what appears a change in their whole character and demeanour, but it really only calls forth properties that have lain latent, and feared to show themselves till such time as they might with safety and impunity. The secret springs of Mrs. Beaucaire's heart were touched; she seemed, even to herself, a new creature—would we might say, a better one! But the soil can only yield according to the seed that has been sown, and the fertility that quickens *that* gives maturity to the weeds that have sprung up among it. Elevation to one, neither prepared for the greatness of virtue, nor the gracefulness of power, produces no happy effect on the internal or external economy. Faults, that in poverty might have died out, in obscurity been concealed, or in the conflict of ordinary life been corrected, placed in the hot-bed of prosperity, fanned by the warm winds of adulation, and supported by the new vices incident

to luxury, become confirmed. Affectation, implanted at a boarding-school at Hampstead, at which Mrs. Beaucaire attained a smattering of everything and a knowledge of nothing, now re-appeared ; the simplicity and retirement of the first years of her wedded life had afforded it no field, it was now transplanted to one sufficiently fertile ; and, as its root remained, there was little fear but it would show its flowers. Vanity, hitherto an unobtrusive inmate of her breast, now made alliance with egotism, and they mutually sustained and proclaimed each other. Extravagance, that had only waited for licence, showed its reckless front ; while economy, the conservator of domestic virtue, and coadjutor of benevolence, fled away.

Prosperity was not more favourable to Mrs. Beaucaire's person than to her mind. The statue that looks lovely in the shady recess, or the dim niche, does not always bear being placed on the pedestal, where it stands high and

distinguished, for criticisms to canvass its proportions and examine its pretensions. The arts of dress, the consciousness of appearance, the anxiety for effect, all tended to spoil the charms they tried to perfect ; and, however she might dazzle the common crowd, to the eye of taste Mrs. Beaucaire of Vex'em Park was less lovely, less interesting, than Mrs. Beaucaire of Broad-street. Not that this aforesaid crowd were any way deficient of that acumen by which most people can see the mote in a brother's eye, though they perceive not the beam in their own. A woman, who was repulsively masculine and withal lame, allowed Mrs. Beaucaire " had a fine figure, but" discovered " she could not move, had no grace ;" another, who was very ugly, objected to her that she was " too pretty—no expression—not a bit."

Of all real or imputed defects Mrs. Beaucaire was, however, in happy unconsciousness, since those that found most fault with her when her back was turned, were the most affectionate

flatterers when her face was towards them. Nor was she less industriously engaged in flattering herself. She forgot how much the gem owes to the setting ; believed the praise her position won was due to her personal merits, and felt no gratitude for her good fortune ; for she fancied she deserved all that she enjoyed.

Agnes saw the carriages, on their way to Vex'em Park, sweep by the still calm abode of her father, and she thought of the gentle exile that was banished to the woods and savannas of America. The gentry of the neighbourhood were now flocking to the park in place of the poor. Vanity was making waste of time and coin, where worth had, with small means, made a harvest of both. Many a rosy cottage child had Agnes seen skipping away from the park, made happy by her that found felicity only in bestowing it ; for the fountains from which it should have flowed to herself had long become dry or diverged. Many a poor woman had Agnes seen improved in her do-

mestic manner and management, by her who might now have nothing to sustain her but the exercise of her duties, and the consciousness of desert. And all that active benevolence had effected in improving the poor of the place, active vanity would now probably subvert. Evil example is like the incendiary's fire; we may perceive where it has sprung, but cannot tell where it may spread. It is not those that sow the whirlwind that always reap the storm; when the blast is once abroad it involves all, even the very straws that lie in its way.

Agnes felt a repugnance to visit the violated scene of her own and Mrs. Melburn's girlhood; but when the day of the great festival arrived, she could not decline joining it. She arrived late that her stay might not be long; but she soon forgot all uneasy feeling. Not because the rooms were brilliantly lighted, and beautifully decorated; not because they were thronged with people who, in the endeavour to be agreeable,



at least appeared gay ; it was in her meeting with Mr. Beaucaire that the charm lay. A flood of thought rushed upon her mind, and lighted up her countenance : taking his arm, they walked about in that eager and engrossed conversation in which friendship, that has been interrupted by circumstances, revels ; and, retracing the past, ceases, for the time being, to live for the present.

“ How singular ! how unexpected an event ! ” exclaimed Mr. Beaucaire, “ that my uncle should purchase this place ! ”

“ Ah, Ralph Beaucaire ! ” exclaimed Agnes, “ how little, at one time, could such a change have been anticipated ! When you and I came here, the children of comparative poverty, and she, now far away, was the heiress of this, then happy, place ! Now *we* revel where *she* has been ruined ! ”

“ Ruined ! Do not say so,” exclaimed Beaucaire. “ But we must not talk of this, it

will unfit me for the present scene. Come and have some refreshment, you are low-spirited."

Mrs. Beaucaire was standing with her brother on one side of her, and his wife on the other, when Mrs. Lennox was led from the room; and though nothing had been directly said against Beaucaire and Agnes, much was insinuated. The Exmores had interested views on their sister, which led them to court her favour; but towards her husband they entertained feelings of resentment, and these made them endeavour to poison her mind against him. They did not gain the point at which they aimed: Mrs. Beaucaire was more accessible to envy than jealousy; hence the ill-feeling they strove to direct against him fell on Agnes, whose mental superiority Mrs. Beaucaire feared, while she resented the homage it won. But her emotions were tainted with no grossness. It is guilt only that is gross, and suspiciously

attributes that baseness to another, which it knows it may appropriate to itself.

“ Mr. Beaucaire does not seem as pleased as he ought to be with the way in which everything has been arranged,” said Mr. Exmore. “ I am sure you have displayed wonderful taste. Who would have thought so much was lying quietly in that little head ! What a sin it was to bury you all those years in Broad-street ! But you will show the world now that you were born for a belle.”

“ Ah ! but it is a pity that every one should see all this, but those that ought to see it most,” observed his wife. “ But no matter, my love, you must put one thing against another ; we have all our roughs as well as smooths ; you must submit, it is what we poor women *must* do.”

“ Submit !” cried Mrs. Beaucaire, whose pride they had piqued. “ It will be after a fashion of my own then.”

“ Ah ! that may be,” rejoined Mrs. Exmore, “ but still you must submit. It is a great thing for you that you have Mr. Coverley ; he will stand by you, and *he* is no common person, possessed of the fortune he has. Who is this Mrs. Lennox ? She looks old enough to be your mother.”

Mrs. Beaucaire felt the vulgarity of her sister-in-law, though she perceived neither her malice nor her flattery. The flattery soothed, the vulgarity offended her self-love ; and pain makes a stronger impression than pleasure. For the sake of her brother Mrs. Beaucaire endured his wife ; but had she been less disposed to concede to them the familiar place they held, they would have seized it : they were both distinguished by a heartless effrontery ; and perseveringly seeking their own advantage, they undermined or baffled every obstacle.

But there were barriers even *they* could not pass, and these were presented by Mr. Beau-

caire; they gained footing in his house, but none with himself. He held them in contempt, and regarded them with aversion; and, though he was above making a pointed display of these sentiments, he was unable to disguise them. As they could not pay him with contempt in return for his scorn, they doubled the amount of their hatred, and were not unwilling to seek liquidation of the account current of ill-feeling, by revenge.

"Come, Amelia," said her brother, "let me supply Beaucaire's place; if he is not proud of you, I am."

He drew her arm through his, and led her to the refreshment-room. When they entered, they perceived Mrs. Lennox in conversation with Beaucaire and his friend Trevor. The former, the moment he discerned his wife, advanced to her, and asked her what she would take?

"Edward will attend to me," she cried with

cold indifference ; and, turning to EXMORE, she indicated what she wished for.

Beaucaire, unconscious of the manner in which her feelings had been worked on, believed this ostentatious preference for her brother was merely exhibited to mortify her husband ; he, therefore, walked away, somewhat disgusted, and resumed his conversation with Agnes and Trevor. One furtive glance from his wife pursued him ; it was a spark from the fire that had been so industriously kindled in her breast. She saw (for he had almost instantly dismissed the little emotion of anger she had moved) that he again eagerly engaged in converse with Agnes and Trevor. In fact, he was engrossed by the desire of mutually displaying them to each other to the utmost advantage ; they were not disinclined to aid his design ; and rarely, perhaps, had a group been seen, in which the individuals appeared better pleased. Was there a greater disposition in society to amalgamate minds by means of eulogizing them to each other, instead of the

more common practice of separating them by the corroding application of scandal and tale-bearing, the milk of human kindness might be made to flow where the lees of human malice are often stirred.

“ You have regained all your usual spirits, my dear Mrs. Lennox,” said Beaucaire, “ so you must dance.”

“ I will,” she replied, “ and with you.” Perhaps this was coquetry, perhaps it was from fear of betraying what she wished, that Trevor would ask her hand, which, had she given him time, he would have done ; but she had already bewildered him a little too much to permit the use of his usually prompt and easy gallantry.

“ Once upon a time,” she continued, “ you used impertinently to prophesy that I should lead apes, and I said in retort I should lead bears. Now,” she added, playfully taking his arm, “ suppose I begin with you ?”

“ No, no,” exclaimed Beaucaire ; “ Trevor would play Bruin better than me.”

But she hurried him, laughing, from the room, and Trevor was about to follow, when Mr. Coverley caught him by the button.

"Trevor, she's a termagant. She killed her first husband, for aught I know, with anything but kindness. Beaucaire has a quiet wife, and wants a lively neighbour; therefore, he recommends to you this West India widow. But take my word for it, she has more qualities than specified in his invoice—she is a bale *I* would not buy."

"This is not fair—is it, my dear madam?" said Trevor, addressing Mrs. Beaucaire. "The lady in question speaks very highly of you, sir."

"Does she? Then she's always putting me in a confounded passion. We had a quarrel yesterday, and shall, perhaps, have another to-morrow. What is the good of her praising me behind my back, when she always plagues me to my face? It puts me in mind of the dis-



tich the boy wrote on the wall of the college that had been beautified out of the fines—

Our worthy college master

Breaks the scholar's head, and gives the walls a plaster.

She gives me the bitter physic, and the lump of sugar for taking the bad taste out of the mouth she gives to you. Marry her; and I shall meet you soon after driving to Doctors' Commons for a divorce."

"No, no; to Dunmow for the fitch," interrupted Trevor, laughing.

"The fitch!" repeated Mr. Coverley. " 'Twas never done yet. Why? Because there never was a woman, who, if she married a man even deaf, blind, and dumb, would not provoke him into hearing, seeing, and swearing. As for Agnes Lennox, she'd aggravate the dead."

"Softly, softly, my dear uncle," said Mrs. Beaucaire, as other persons entered, and, accepting Mr. Trevor's arm, she returned to the ball-room.

Agnes was dancing with Beaucaire. As animation always improved her, she appeared to great advantage, and won no inconsiderable share of admiration generally, and Mr. Trevor's particularly; who, mortified at having missed the opportunity of dancing with her, resolved to snatch the first moment possible to indemnify himself. But through the intervention of circumstances too trifling to relate, yet important enough to demand his attention, Agnes eluded him again and again, and he finally lost sight of her.

Small difficulties in the way of even a common acquaintance quicken the desire of intimacy; their influence in affairs of the heart is a universal fact. It were, perhaps, premature to speak of the state of Mr. Trevor's had he not come into the scene with a fancy already inflamed by the lady's reputation, and his reason prepossessed in favour of her fortune and connexions; so that the graces of her manner and person, possessing all they did to

charm, could scarcely fail of the prompt effect they produced.

Mr. Trevor retired that night more disposed for romantic ruminations than for the sober speculations that had hitherto occupied his brain. Bachelorism and Broad-street presented so gloomy a perspective, that he could not endure to look upon it; could the former be abrogated, the latter might be borne; (for every one could not expect to have fortune carved out for them as Beaucaire had.) But how was the first to be done? especially with the speed that the demands of business required. Never was a lover more puzzled how to take the north road to matrimony than Mr. Trevor how to take the short road to it. Two things, however, were in his favour,—Mrs. Lennox was a widow, and Beaucaire was his friend.

After dreams, waking and sleeping, with interludes of thought, and the *finale* of a careful toilette, Mr. Trevor found himself the next morning in the drawing-room at Beeshome.

Mrs. Lennox was not alone; she had two ladies with her, to both of whom he had been presented at the Park the preceding night; and seeing, perhaps, that he was in no mood for talking, they relieved him of all necessity of doing more than listening, with what patience he might.

"I have been thinking," said one, "that our friend, Mrs. Beaucaire, might have paid her husband the compliment of having her child named after him."

"I know," replied Agnes, laughing, "that it is the set rule in such matters made and established. But I think she was quite right to depart from it. It is really insufferably tedious to hear the same sound over and over again, generation after generation. Pray, now, how many Johns have you in your family? I am sure they ought to go about labelled like physic bottles, or numbered like buckets in a church, to enable people to distinguish them from one another. To give a child the pronoun-

men of every second person in the parish is neither compliment on one side, nor distinction on the other. When it is a name of note, as some surnames, the adoption may indicate something ; but with the common run of hackneyed names, they are like the marks on sheep, one serves a thousand."

" Ah ! I dare say it is as I have heard," cried the second lady ; " and poor Mr. Beaucaire dare not say his soul is his own."

" What say you to that, Mr. Trevor ?" asked Agnes.

" That Mrs. Beaucaire is as incapable of exercising undue power, as my friend of submitting to it. He appears to yield to her all the minor and pleasanter details of life, reserving the major and more important ones for himself ; the best possible division of their social labours."

" That does not accord with *your* opinions, Mrs. Lennox," said the first speaker.

" Entirely, in the present case," said Agnes.

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We that partook should, I think, be the last to find fault with the feast."

"I do it from principle, Mrs. Lennox. As I tell my girls, many a man's ruin lies at his wife's door."

"Then you should, I think, fulminate your censure before the festival, not after it," said Agnes. "And hold yourself in readiness, should the consequences you anticipate ever occur, to refund your share of the waste."

"Do you know," exclaimed the second matron, coming to the relief of her rebuked friend, "the birth of young Beaucaire has deprived me of *one* great enjoyment? I used so to tease them about their having no family, and was always offering them some of mine."

"I am sincerely rejoiced," said Agnes, "that you can no longer indulge such cruel sport. It is such unreflecting pleasantry that brings discontent into many a childless home, where, but for foolish taunts and teasing jokes, it had never

found its way. The divine precept that enjoins us to do by others as we would be done by, should be held especially sacred in all that regards the feelings, the wounds of which, though least seen, are ever most felt."

Perhaps Mrs. Lennox was desirous of giving a speedy dismissal to her morning visitors: if so, she succeeded; for they rose and took leave: the lady who gave her girls such prudent admonitions, giving a very pressing invitation to Mr. Trevor, on whom she would no doubt have been happy to bestow one of her well-instructed damsels.

"My dear Agnes," said Dr. Clare, who had come in a short time before the ladies retired, "you have spoken with a great deal too much asperity to these friends of yours."

"I shall never attain your charity and equanimity, I fear," she cried, in a tone and manner of the gentlest affection. "I hate to hear sweeping censures uttered in ignorance, if not in



malice. Reproach should be addressed *to*, not spoken *of*, an offender. It is then generous, because it may then do good, and must incur some risk, for reproof is usually repaid by displeasure."

"Perhaps," said her father, "admonition were a better word than reproof—it might obviate reproof altogether, which often, by its severity, confirms and increases the disorder it would cure. Differing as minds do in calibre—in the circumstances that first formed, and afterwards operate upon them, we must feel compassion instead of disgust towards those that err. I see no reason why moral disease should not be treated with the same gentle firmness with which the physician treats physical disease."

"I agree with the spirit of your remark," said Trevor. "But I fear admonition and reproof would not produce such distinct effects as you seem to imagine. Both necessarily imply

(however little the administrator may assume) superiority, which is always offensive to the universal weakness of self-love."

"Thence," resumed Dr. Clare, "the wisdom of the precept, that says—

Men should be taught as though you taught them not,  
And things unknown proposed as things forgot.

But I stepped up stairs, though I have stayed all this while," he added, "to tell you, Agnes, that I cannot accompany you to the Park, according to Mrs. Beaucaire's invitation. You must, my love, be my apology, and Mr. Trevor will be kind enough to be your escort."

When the doctor withdrew, the tide of conversation that had been flowing so high, experienced a sudden ebb: there occurred one of those painful pauses peculiar to those touched with the sentiment that, in its first approaches, fills the heart and fetters the tongue. Agnes blushed as beautifully as she might have done at eighteen, when, on accidentally raising her eyes,

she encountered Trevor's, full of that love he had given worlds to utter. Slight as had been her glance, for her lids had almost instantly dropped, it was sufficient to show her that Trevor's embarrassment did not sit ungracefully upon him, and perhaps her heart accepted the silent homage that spoke the potency of her influence, with a feeling that no words, however eloquent, could have awakened.

Recollecting herself, Agnes presented Trevor a book, and told him she should not be long equipping herself for her walk to the Park. Her general frankness and present good humour emboldened him to attempt a sentence which from sympathy possibly she understood, but devoid of that aid she might have found it unintelligible. She blushed again, snatched away her hand, and hurried from the room.

Trevor sank into a delightful reverie ; a tacit encouragement had been given in the smile with which she left him. Few things are of quicker growth than hopes that spring from

ardent wishes. Her whole manner had told him she was not displeased at his visit, nor impatient of his presence. He fancied, as he reviewed the last hour, that he could detect many of the hieroglyphic signs of preference—her reappearance did not dissipate these pleasant fancies, which strengthened in a strange degree as, with Agnes leaning on his arm, he passed along the grassy meadows and green lanes that led from Beeshome to the Park.

It is rarely that passion receives so much sanction from prudence, or, having such sanction, is so ardent as that which Agnes inspired and promised to participate. There was a singular concordance in their minds, manners, persons, and fortune. Both were of that range of intellect which is in advance of the age in which they live; both had that generous conciliation of manner that reconciles mankind to superiority; both had passed the first period of youth, and both had a mediocre share of personal

advantages; while the fortune of each, being respectable, might, when united, with economy on her side, and skill on his, become considerable.

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## CHAPTER VII.

"AGNES," said Beaucaire, as he drew her for a walk that evening into the park—"how little we know ourselves! How often do we imagine passions extinguished and feelings past away, that are only lying dormant! This place has revived a world of past recollections. Have you seen old Hannah Reece since I have appointed her to the sovereignty of the store-room here?"

"No," replied Agnes.

"I am still to her the little Ralph of past times," he resumed. "She has renewed all her old recollections, and has been talking to me of my mother in a manner that touches my soul; and of one other that must touch my soul no more."

"Yes; let her touch it still with veneration for her virtues, and inspire you to imitate them.

Magdalene's was one of those great minds that can effect much with little ; let us not reverse her plan. Support all that Magdalene projected."

"The thought is like yourself," he replied. "Yes, she shall hear that all she wished, but was not allowed to realize, I have carried forward. O, if they, whose sordid fears separated us, could see us now ! What have they purchased for their child ? Ruin and a wretch ! While the poor, scorned Ralph Beaucaire—behold, how he might have endowed her ! And how he would have loved her ! *You*, Agnes, can tell ; for you know all *she* was, all that I am. O, Magdalene ! your obedience——"

Agnes interrupted him ; recalled him from a review as fatal as it was fruitless, and proceeded to give a sketch of the various plans that the benevolence of Mrs. Melburn had in part realized, in part projected. He listened, and became calm.

"You must be my delegate," he cried ; "I

have too much to engage my mind and occupy my time, to admit of my doing more than make an occasional inquiry, and contribute the necessary funds."

"No; I will be the coadjutrix of Mrs. Beaucaire," said Agnes. "Mrs. Beaucaire must be your delegate."

Beaucaire smiled contemptuously; the strong contrast forced upon his recollection made the weakness of her to whom he was allied more apparent.

"*She!*" he repeated. "O, I deserve all I endure! Having loved as I did; whom I did,—could I turn and barter myself for a non-entity—assume the yoke that galls me—rivet the chains that clank in my encumbered path!"

Mrs. Lennox was shocked at these strong expressions.

"Shame, shame, Ralph Beaucaire!" she cried; "this is unworthy of you. Like all men, you think only for yourself. You took to wife, as matter of convenience it should seem, a weak



girl. Was it her fault she was such, or that you chose her? Six years she has been yours; in that time you have discovered all her deficiencies—tried to remedy none. If it is your calamity that you are married to a woman you do not love, is it none that she is married to a man that does not love her? It is fruitless to regret the past—it is material to improve the present—to prepare at least prospective and comparative happiness. Mrs. Beaucaire may be directed to better things, would you become her guide.”

“ You are a visionary, Agnes,” cried Beaucaire. “ Amelia is not the material that easily remoulds. Weak of purpose, she is strong in prejudice; her capacity is narrow, and choked up with much that it is impossible to dislodge; and were it possible, I am not the one to do it. I want patience, perseverance, and forbearance—to me, of all men, such an effort were most impracticable.”

“ This impatience, which cannot brook the

slowness and obtuseness of inferior or uncultivated intellect," exclaimed Agnes, "is one of the crimes of genius. Superior powers should only render us more tolerant; since we were never given mental treasure, any more than pecuniary wealth, to hoard it for ourselves, or only heap it on those that need it not. But this is the prevailing practice in both cases: the ignorant and the poor bear in their deficiencies a badge of debasement; and because already down, instead of stooping to raise them, we trample over them to minister to those already overburthened with wealth, whether of mind or money."

"Do not afflict me by reproach, Agnes. This has been Trevor's argument ere now. It is useless to *me*; I have not the courage to begin; should not have the constancy to go on; nor would she have the humility and assiduity necessary on her part. Ignorance has its arrogance as well as genius, and full-grown indolence never yet showed the blossoms of industry. But

*you*, you that have the benevolent patience that can bear the annoying recurrence of petty and perpetual evils, try if *you* can elevate her—try, for the sake of my child ! Give her, for *his* sake, sense and feeling—if you can ! ”

“ Feeling she has, surely, and in excess,” said Agnes. “ Can anything be more extravagant than her maternal fondness ? ”

“ Let us speak no more on this subject,” he replied impatiently. “ There is a something I cannot define that dashes my cup with bitterness. I believe Trevor is right : I want sympathy—I want a mind to speak to mine ; a heart to feel to mine. I have a phantom before me that mocks my eye, but never fills my grasp. As if the gulf that separates us was not wide enough already, she surrounds herself with those Exmores, whom I hate. You see how they hang about her. ‘ I would sooner be a toad, and live upon the vapour of a dungeon,’ than breathe beside them. No, Agnes, no ! Ambition must be my refuge—happiness is not for me ! Tell

me," he cried, as if struck by a sudden recollection,—“ what do you think of Trevor? ”

“ More than I ever thought of any one on so short an acquaintance.”

“ I wish my uncle, who maintains a woman can never give a direct or candid answer, had heard this reply. Need I tell you that he loves you? ”

“ He has attempted to persuade me to believe as much,” she cried, with downcast eyes.

“ Be as superior to the trifling of your sex in this instance, Agnes, as you are in every other. Make him happy, and immediately. On all the important points of character, you are, through mutual friends, known to each other, as it were, for years; as for the nicer shades, the longest courtship does not reveal them.”

“ It is, indeed, a term of delusion,” cried Agnes, laughing; “ delusion and deceit.”

“ Say delusion, not deceit,” said Beaucaire.

“ Though deceit is practised, it is not purposed,

and do any come so willing to be duped as the lover ? ”

“ None, except his mistress,” she rejoined. “ But I have resolved, in my own case, to reverse the common arrangement. I shall wear plain dowlas while I am wooed, and if I ever wed, *then* I will put on my grogam.”

“ Do not speak conditionally,” said Beaucaire. “ Do not trifle with his happiness and your own. In the general order of unions, persons ‘are paired, not matched ;’ you will be both. I can have no motive in urging this affair, but to promote the happiness of two beings I so entirely esteem. Tell me—do you believe me when I say that Trevor is all truth and honour ?”

“ I do.”

“ You have found him a gentleman in manner and education ?”

“ I have.”

“ Convinced he loved you, you could repay his passion ?”

There was an archness in Beaucaire’s smile

the said paper, and the same  
perceived by the paper, the said  
valued as the said paper, and the  
and the said paper, and the same  
and the same.

"I am very glad to see  
"in the said paper, and the same  
Trevor's. He is a very good  
the said paper, and the same  
not all the paper, and the same  
work. He is a very good  
of his life. There is a very  
fine, and the same paper, and  
a paper, and the same paper."

After the paper, and the same  
and the same paper, and the same  
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shadows, over her heart : her sympathy with Beaucaire had unstrung some of its chords ; the consciousness that she was again loved, had touched others ; and the prospect of change, with the apprehension inseparably attached to it, had made many vibrate. As she entered the Hermitage, the image of Magdalene seemed to rise before her. What would she have given for the solace of her friendship at that moment, to have asked her counsel and submitted to its guidance—secure that it had been uttered in love, and conceived in wisdom ! Another image too rose to her imagination—Hagar, the mysterious, amiable Hagar ! In that very place she had been discovered by her gentle and now sustaining friend—taken in her desolation and distress, a stranger and an outcast—of a distinct people, and a different creed, to the benevolent bosom of Magdalene, whose liberal nature remembered only her claim as a fellow-creature, and admitted no suspicions to stint, no fears to chill, no prejudices to shake her charity.

From this mood of thought Agnes was awakened by the entrance of her father, followed by Trevor. She saw at a glance the power that had wrought on the former, and the result it had produced; and they saw she was just in that tone of feeling in which the presence of the loved and the appeal of the loving are most effective.

"My dear Agnes," cried her father, seating himself by her, "but lately regained!—how soon again I must resign you!—for I think you cannot be insensible to the attachment you have won. Mr. Trevor has my entire concurrence and esteem. I relinquish to him all but such portion of your affection as he can spare, and you may think I deserve."

She buried her face in her father's bosom, but allowed Trevor to take her hand.

"A good daughter, I have invariably remarked," resumed Dr. Clare, "makes a good wife. The exercise of filial duty is the best preparation for the fulfilment of conjugal duty.



The same observation I have made on my own sex. The man that has always regarded his mother with tenderness, respect, and gratitude, never fails in those points towards his wife. Mr. Trevor, I know the father of Agnes well ; I know your mother better ; for I can study another more accurately than myself. I know the worth that moulded your character—the manner in which you have honoured and repaid it. I bestow on you one that ‘ will be a crown to her husband,’ with more satisfaction than I should bestow her on him from whom she might receive a crown—were it the proudest royalty could confer.”

That evening Agnes and Trevor were seen tracing the pleasantest and most picturesque walks of the park. There was a clear sky above them, with the crescent moon and many stars ; and there was nature in all its still and vernal beauty round them. Their minds were cumbered with no dark regrets, no deserved reproach, and their hearts were filled with the

hollest, the most rational hopes. Capable of expansive benevolence, they had large sympathies and abundant sources of happiness, which even age could not impair—hardly diminish ; for if some would necessarily fade and fall, others would as necessarily spring forth and flourish. They had another security for peace and enjoyment : they were strangers to those rankling, corroding feelings that often eat, like a canker, into the fairest fortunes ; they envied to none triumph or success ; they desired for none disgrace or overthrow ; they could meet ingratitude and forgive it, and behold “envy, malice, and all uncharitableness,” with that philosophic pity which is perhaps a part of the principle of almighty and universal mercy.

As the lovers were about to return to the house, they overtook Mr. Coverley, and a gentleman of the name of Teppet, who enjoyed, or, as it was more generally regarded, endured the post of Mr. Coverley’s factotum ; he was

steward, secretary, confidential friend, and companion. Possibly he considered, that as severe penalties are often attached to high privileges, it became him to exercise the humility he practised for the sake of the emolument he received. He the more readily arrived at this conclusion as interest was his god, and gain his sole gratification. It was his anxious care to offend none, in which he had perhaps less success than the opposite result of pleasing none; for negative merits, like neutral tints, though admitted among the shades of society, are never admired.

This man was a source of infinite amusement to Agnes. Not that she allowed herself the ungenerous indulgence of ridiculing his peculiarities, it was sufficient to her entertainment to observe them; more particularly whenever he was present at those "keen encounters of the tongue" in which she sometimes engaged with Mr. Coverley. Placed between the blasts of these belligerent powers, and subject to occasional appeal from both, and desirous to contra-

dict neither, he was something like a weather-vane on a gusty day, continually turning, or agitated with indecisive deliberation, not which way to turn, but how to turn both ways at once; till the portion of brain allotted to him became perfectly bewildered.

"Well, Agnes," said Mr. Coverley—for their conversation always *began* in good humour—"you have been about the park; what think you of my alterations? Teppet thinks they are everything that could be desired."

"No alteration of this place can please me," replied Agnes. "No hand can change without to me profaning it. But the original sin lies with the absolute power vested in a vicious idiot, and which left genius, worth, and beauty at his mercy. You knew the late possessor of this place, Mr. Teppet?"

"I did, Madam."

"What of him?" rejoined Mr. Coverley.

"He has only robbed a friend of mine of peace, fortune, almost of hope!" said Agnes.

"And can't this friend of yours obtain some redress?" asked Mr. Coverley.

"No."

"Why?"

"Because she is his wife," said Agnes, impressively—"the creature that in this world can be most injured and least redressed."

"O! his *wife*," repeated Mr. Coverley. "Why if he is ruined, she is ruined, of course."

"How easily we reconcile ourselves to matters of course!" exclaimed Agnes. "'The negro, like the brute, becomes a beast of burthen, and conscience is not offended,' because it is a matter of course. What but habit could make us regard with indifference anything so tyrannical in structure as the laws of marriage? Woman is a sacrifice to society, and to victimize her is made legal, and is, therefore, *safe*."

"You have uttered a gross libel against the laws of your country, Mrs. Lennox!" exclaimed Mr. Coverley.

"Laws," she replied, "are everywhere made

for the strong against the weak. Those that use such tools must necessarily be defiled by them. The smith becomes grimed with soot at the forge—the lawyer contracts a soil at the forum. I will tell you a fable\* of Pestalozzi's, very applicable to my present argument:—

“ ‘ Tongs, hammer, and file, boasted against all other iron—“ Our master, the smith, arms his right hand with us when he forges you.”

“ ‘ All other iron was silent ; but an old horse-shoe replied, “ I once heard a king say, that, of all men, there were none he despised so much as those whom he must hire for the purpose of laying hold of others, and hammering and filing them.” ’

“ In this manner I regard them that wield and avail themselves of the laws of selfish man.”

Mr. Teppet, like the stag in the fable, looked at his legs, not, as he might have done, to decry their beauty, but in meditation of the feasibility of flight—but he had just arrived at the con-

\* It is feared this is an anachronism.

viction of the superior eligibility of affecting deafness, when the Stentorian voice of Mr. Coverley acted on him like a shock of electricity.

"Szound, madam!" he exclaimed, "what do you mean by that? Is there no selfishness in woman?"

"Certainly there is," said Agnes; "but in comparison to yours as one to a hundred. A woman, when she loves, for instance, wishes to make happiness for another, and in the reflex of his felicity finds her own, and that often under circumstances not in themselves happy. In a like case, a man always, in the first place, regards himself—in self-gratification he seeks his felicity; what he confers is a secondary consideration, very often none at all."

"That there is more selfishness in the male than the female character, I grant you," said Trevor. "But there are few, among cultivated men, so selfish as to avail themselves of all the power they possess."

"I am willing to believe there are such,"

said Agnes, "and I am convinced their number will increase. Bad laws will be abrogated by disuse before they are repealed by Parliament. But there is no security, while they exist, that he that has a privilege, under some incitement of interest and temptation, may not be led to use it, in spite of equity and even custom. Law ought to be, what lawyers pretend to say it is, 'the perfection of human reason;' since society never acts upon an abstract principle of justice, but upon a short-sighted calculation of consequences."

"You are at your old system of levelling," cried Mr. Coverley, "but you shall never level *me*. Tell me, how did we attain, if, as you would make out, we do not deserve to hold, supremacy?"

"You were sent into the world with superiority of physical strength, and its overweening consciousness," she replied, "very wisely, and of necessity. In the same manner, and



from the same motive, men, and men distinguished by little else but bodily strength, are sent to new colonies. While the world was new, war and hard work were the sole or essential pursuits; for them, strong and ferocious as you were, you were perfectly fit. As the world advanced, men grew more intellectual, but not more honest. Among themselves they soon found the strong mind prevailed over the strong body—they were obliged to submit to each other; but they made common cause to confine the ascendancy to their own sex. Knowledge they discovered was power; they resolved, therefore, to keep it to themselves. But that stream, when it reached a certain point, overflowed, and sought new channels. When this happened, though some of you ran out with pots and pans to save and secrete the sacred waters, others polluted what they could not appropriate; not a few armed themselves with sticks and staves, and, by means of intimidation, tried to keep

us off, while some, more cunning, gave specious advice on the repulsive and masculine properties of knowledge ; nevertheless, we drank and were informed, and we shall continue to drink and be further informed, till we reach that point at which, supposing you to remain as gross, and we to grow less generous, we shall sink you into worse slaves than ever you made us. In fact, my dear Mr. Coverley, man was sent to prepare the way, and make the path straight for woman, whose finer attributes are unfit for rough work, but are destined to carry to perfection all such as are refined." .

Mr. Coverley had allowed her to proceed so far ere he executed a laugh, meant to be the superlative of derision ; but it only attained to the positive of rage. It was said of Dr. Johnson, that he " laughed like a rhinoceros ;" it might have been said of Mr. Coverley that he roared like one. Mr. Teppet's sensitive spirit quailed to its depths, and he looked at Mrs.

Lennox, who had provoked the tornado, with more amazement than if she had suddenly started out of the ground as an armed Amazon.

“Worms, reptiles, insects will govern the nobler animals of the forest first,” exclaimed Mr. Coverley. “All that is strong is great and noble, witness the lion and the elephant; such is man. All that is weak, is vile and venomous, witness the weasel and the wasp; such is woman.”

“There is the *female* elephant and the *male* wasp,” said Agnes, as Mr. Coverley seized Teppet’s arm, and walked rapidly away upon the “ram’s horns” system of securing by retreat the advantage of the last word.

“I told Mr. Beaucaire,” said Agnes, turning with a smile to Trevor, “that while I was being wooed I would wear plain dowlas; but I have been assuming my chain-mail. I fear the clash of the sword and buckler has

sounded harshly in your ear ; but, like the flint, I only show fire when struck."

" Yes," said Trevor ; and taking her hand, he added—

' Which, much enforced, will show a hasty spark,  
And straight is cold again.' "

" Nay, I will not deceive you, I fear I do not need much enforcing : nor do I cool as soon as Brutus pretended he did. But, believe me, 'tis the honester nature that flashes when offended, and shows, not smothers, its rage. Though Mr. Coverley and I thus play at cross-purposes, we love each other. I am certain, did I need his aid, he would freely extend it to me, and did he require my care and sympathy, I could be to him as a daughter. But what would your pensive, plaintive workers of samplers and sayers of nothings think of such an anarch as I am ? Reared in hypocrisy, hiding all feeling, and pretending to have none, save a little mawkish sensibility that suits the slavery they seek ! Truly, a bright idea they had of

love that established such a system ! They thought, I suppose, with the poet, that the crushed flower gives forth most perfume ; if so, it is at the expense of its life."

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## CHAPTER VIII.

ABOUT a month after the christening of Mar-mion Coverley Beaucaire, a bridal party, distinguished only by its simplicity, appeared at the church at Bramford; after the ceremony, they returned to Beeshome, and thence Mr. and Mrs. Trevor departed for London, unconscious or regardless how many ladies were shocked at the shortness of the courtship—how many of the Malthusians, that scarcely admit a first, were horrified at a second marriage.

But it was not of the multitude that the newly-married pair thought, when, contrary to all established usage, they came in the very honeymoon to Broad-street; the bridegroom to renew attention to business, and the bride to aid his toils, and share the relaxation that relieved them. The word honeymoon is said

to originate in an ancient custom of living on mead for a month after marriage. Mr. and Mrs. Trevor designed to make the sweets of their union extend throughout the whole of their lives ; they were, therefore, not anxious to distinguish the first month by any undue share.

Trevor's bachelor home soon altered its appearance ; elegance and cheerfulness became its most distinguishing characteristics ; but economy had acted in co-operation with good taste, and the change, though great, was made at small expense.

Time, well and fully occupied, flies fast : anniversary succeeded anniversary ; almost each brought an innocent claimant on the care and affection of Agnes and her happy husband, while their fortune improved as their family increased.

“ Ah, madam !” said Hannah Reece, on one occasion when Mrs. Trevor made a visit to Suffolk, “ this shall be *my* boy.” And she

took Arthur Trevor, the first-born of Agnes, on her knee. "I have nothing to do with Master Marmion," she continued. "He is just what I said he would be, spoiled—spoiled—totally spoiled. I am very glad you do not live here for a constancy, and that this dear child is out of the way of the example of Master Marmion. Ah! madam, I said to my Betsy, make your *first* child go right, and the rest will follow in his ways, as the flock follows the bell-wether."

"You are very right, Hannah; the force of example is powerful with all, but particularly so with children, who observe much, but reflect little."

"Ah, madam! you would pity little Master Beaucaire if you could see how *he* is treated. No one is allowed to contradict or oppose him; the consequence is, he knows no will but his own. Sometimes his mother attempts to get the rule, but after a long



struggle, she gives way to him, and that of course makes him worse than ever. Then, madam, she often threatens him, but never puts her threats in execution. Some of them are so foolish that she cannot. She will say, 'Nobody shall love you.' 'I will never take you out again;' and the next minute, madam, he is kissed, and caressed and carried out."

"A most absurd, but, unfortunately, a very common mode of acting towards children," replied Mrs. Trevor. "This is practically teaching falsehood, and shaking that respect and confidence on which the power of the parent should be based. He is, too, that unfortunate thing, an only child; he can hardly be made acquainted with the duty and the pleasure of participation."

"I assure you, madam, the child is already overbearing, selfish, and ungrateful," observed Hannah. "Sorrow and suffering is before him, you may depend on it. I said so from

the first day I heard of his birth; and there is not a day he lives that I do not feel more and more sure of it."

Arthur, whose judicious mother had sent him away, that no ideas unsuited to his age might find access to his mind from her conversation with Hannah, came bounding in from the lawn to announce his papa, whom he said he could discern at some distance down the road, accompanied by a gentleman.

Mrs. Trevor dismissed Hannah, and proceeded to the drawing-room.

In a few minutes she heard steps and voices on the stairs, and distinguished that of her old friend, Beaucaire, addressing her husband. When they entered the room, the latter presented his companion as Sir Ralph Beaucaire.

"Yes," he cried, taking Mrs. Trevor's hand, "I have received the honour of knighthood; I must trick out my decline with such substitutes as I can gain, to replace the real advantages time compels me to resign."

Mrs. Trevor gazed on him as he uttered this apology for his ambition, and the bauble it had bought. Nine years had elapsed since the period of her marriage, in which time her intercourse with the Beaucaires had gradually decreased. Thus she was more struck with the change in Sir Ralph's appearance than if more habituated to his presence. His vivacity was entirely gone, his manner no longer unstudied, his very words seemed selected ere spoken. He was grown pale, and much thinner, and the warning grey was mingling amid his black hair. Her eyes turned from him to her husband, on whose knee two of his younger children were climbing, having been attracted to the room by the sound of his voice. Though two or three years older than Beaucaire, he looked ten years younger. His form was full, his face florid, and expressive of cheerfulness in a far greater degree than in his youth. He was continually feeling, and thus his countenance

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reflected the innocent gaiety of his well-trained children, and the bright good humour of their genial mother.

“Beaucaire,” thought Agnes, “is the pine of the mountain, scathed by the winds, and scorched by the suns, that have visited his lofty, lonely heights; my Trevor is the elm of the valley, sheltered and shaded, spreading his green branches, rearing his majestic head amid the fellowship of kindred, and in the climate of kindness.”

Sir Ralph's visit was brief; though he expressed little, he probably felt much towards his old friends. But new habits had grown upon him, and he could not immediately relinquish them in their favour. His mind was, besides, oppressed by a multiplicity of affairs, and his time extensively engrossed. He had lost his capacity for friendship, and increased his capacity for business, and was most content when most fully occupied with the latter. It is

thus the means of enjoyment become the end ; and men hurry on with the purpose of becoming happy without ever attaining the consummation. In crossing the alpine heights of ambition, one peak is surmounted only to discover another yet higher, which the aspirant can still less resist scaling than the former ; for past difficulties successfully conquered, give new assurances and fresh stimulants to future achievement ; and the reputation acquired can only be sustained by continuing the career in which it commenced.

While Sir Ralph had become the slave of ambition, his wife had become the slave of fashion. His were the lofty, hers the petty vanities of life ; but the same principle actuated both. The difference in the magnitude of their aims arose from the difference of the orbits in which they moved. Ambition is bounded by probability. The common soldier may indulge visions of the marshal's baton ; the village

coquette may dream of a coronet. But they could not exchange these fancies and still retain their aspirations ; for desire and endeavour die where hope is not.

Sir Ralph desired to be a man of consequence, his wife desired to be a woman of fashion ; each prescribed the line in which they resolved to move, and retired into it. Having once done so, superstition was never more fearful of overstepping the circle prescribed by the magician, than they of losing any of the false ground they had taken.

While Mrs. Trevor had remained content with her house in Broad-street, Lady Beaucaire had removed to a mansion in Grosvenor-square. While the one lived for the friendly world, and rarely counted more than ten at her parties ; the other existed for the fashionable world, and numbered hundreds at her assemblies. Energy and satisfaction marked Mrs. Trevor's life ; languor and dissipation divided the profitless days of Lady Beaucaire. The first was a happy

mother without vanity, the latter was a vain mother without happiness.

A parallel no less striking could be drawn between Sir Ralph and Mr. Trevor. The one had the show, the other the substance of felicity. The voices of the many made much of the name of Beaucaire; the hearts of a few made much of Trevor himself. The first was nominally a father, and a husband; the latter was really such. Pride, vanity, and self-interest sometimes appealed to the knight by these titles; truth, tenderness, and devotion always addressed Trevor by those names. Wealth without riches, and riches beyond wealth; luxury without enjoyment, and enjoyments beyond luxury, were the distinctions existing between the fate and fortune of the friends, who had, to use the beautiful simile of Coleridge, left the mountain brow of youth a united current, but parting into separate streams in their course, diverged, never to unite again.

About this time Sir Ralph thought proper to interfere in the management of his son, and to insist that what he termed his education should commence—that is, that the superstructure of technical knowledge should be built upon the moral chaos already existing in his young mind.

Marmion had hitherto been the inseparable companion of his mother. Petted, courted, and caressed by all that approached her, he was almost intuitively impressed with the idea that the world was made for him, not he for the world. The adoration of his mother was the reaction of her own gross self-love ; the homage of dependents, the reaction of mercenary interest and imitative servility ; added to these, he was exposed to the deteriorating influence of visitors, who too generally made him a medium for administering flattery to his mother. Among these the Exmores were assiduous and insidious debasers : willing to worship the rising sun, they endeavoured to gain a strong hold of the young heir's mind ; being philosophers enough to know



the force of habit and first impressions. But beyond even all these Mr. Coverley had, perhaps, the largest share in forming the character of Marmion ; for he really loved the child, while others only affected so to do, and his influence was proportionably great. All his characteristics, which time neither softened nor improved, were of the most striking order. A worse model could scarcely be presented to the observation of a young mind ; nor could worse habits be adopted towards a child than Mr. Coverley indulged. It was one of his amusements to provoke Marmion's irascibility, because the boy's rage amused him ; nor did he lose his relish for this exhibition, when respect for himself was merged in the angry feelings he excited. Adult intercourse had produced in Marmion that precocity of mind that is often mistaken for evidence of superior talent ; the partiality of Mr. Coverley placed prematurity, often pertness, to this account. Not content with the conviction himself, he instilled it into Marmion, who had,

very naturally, no objection to believe himself the eighth wonder of the world.

Thus, a whole conclave of hypocrites, with a silly mother, and a superannuated uncle at their head, unfortunately moulded the fine materials nature had yielded in the organization of Marmion. Beautiful in face and form, he appeared one of those in whom nature could not but have designed to shrine a noble spirit, while his fine health allowed no physical impediment to lie in the way of his improvement. But alas! these very advantages had been made the avenues to mischief; his beauty commanded too much admiration, and his health infused too much confidence. Another unfortunate circumstance must not pass unnoted. In such little intercourse as Sir Ralph held with his son, he ever preferred to exercise over him the dominion of fear, deeming it a necessary counteraction to his mother's dominion of love, as it was termed. Harsh command and severe reproof, Marmion had never met but from his father; the effects were soon

evident ; first fear, and then aversion, took possession of the child's mind. He would cling, with instinctive preference, to his gentler parent ; and she, always shallow in her views, cherished, instead of checking, these impressions, because she believed all of Marmion's love that his father lost was her gain. Hence, the only one connected with him, that possessed any share of superiority of mind, had lost all salutary influence over Marmion ; and the tie that existed between Sir Ralph and his son seemed, almost from the first, a mere conventional compact, uncemented by paternal fondness or filial affection.

A variety of tutors each added something to the moral structure of Marmion's character. The more estimable their own, the less likely they were to remain at such a post. The authoritative interference of the weak and ignorant is too painful to a cultivated and informed mind to be readily brooked : thus Lady Beaucaire deprived her son of two or three valuable preceptors, while she secured a continued contami-

nation from those who dazzled her with pretended erudition, and flattered her with affected homage.

In due course of time Marmion was sent to college, where Arthur Trevor was already a favourite son of Alma Mater. Placed in contact, they became acquainted; and had they been on an equal footing, they might have become intimate; but Marmion, who stood in the first rank at the University, was condescending, not conciliatory, to Arthur, who only occupied the second; thus, perhaps fortunately for the one, and unfortunately for the other, they never became strict friends.

The weak pride in which Marmion had been reared led him to seek aristocratic associates: the true principles in which Arthur had been bred induced him to seek intellectual companionship. Marmion refused none recommended by rank—accepted none that wanted it. Arthur confined himself to no class, knowing that worth and talent may be found in all.

It is only in the seclusion of retirement that conflict can be avoided. Amid the busy scenes of life, even those that walk most peacefully will get jostled by the careless or the rude, and be forced, either in reprisal or self-defence, to take part in broil and battle. Endeavour was soon made to cast ridicule upon Arthur : it is the practice of the foolish to adopt this weapon in an endeavour to drive away those that exhibit them in hideous contrast ; it is something like the policy of that dauber, who, having drawn a miserable picture of a fowl, hired a boy to pelt away the live ones, that no comparison might arise to the prejudice of his wretched performance.

Marmion was always prompt at aggression, never at apology ; and would rather do further wrong to make himself appear right, than retract one inch of ground by acknowledgment of errors or concession to the injured. Arthur acted in direct reverse—but with this juster, more conciliating spirit, he united a manly firm-

ness that could more than sustain the shock of Marmion's fierceness; a perspicuous reason that could more than rebut Marmion's wit. Neither had the latter a very decided advantage in point of person; if Arthur was not so handsome, he was more elegant; he did not catch the eye so soon, but he detained it longer: there was an intellectual depth in his expression which grew upon the gazer; the one challenged attention; the other chained it.

One conflict with Arthur satisfied Marmion that such contests were not for his advantage; and thenceforward he regarded young Trevor with involuntary respect, but also with jealousy, fear, and aversion. These are emotions that may glance, but cannot rest in a mind formed upon high principles, and engaged in elevated pursuits: there is no depth of that peculiar soil that they require, and which they find in the breast of the ignorant, the idle, or the selfish. The active housewife knows that no insects harbour where no dust is allowed to rest; all that

is noxious chooses a congenial abode before it swarms, and then, like all that is vile, sins against the very power that protects it.

By the time Arthur attained his eighteenth year, he had carried off the highest honours ; while Marmion had not gained one. This was a more apparent than real mortification ; for university honours have not unusually rewarded the dull, and eluded the bright, and are more attainable to the diligence that so often indemnifies the first, than to the quickness that distinguishes the latter. Arthur had had peculiar advantages ; his mother was a mathematician, and she had such skill in the art of education, that she possessed her children with the principles of science, while they appeared only to engage with her in a common investigation. The pannels of the drawing-room door, the compartments of the walls of the breakfast-room had afforded Arthur his first lessons. When very young much had been taught him in sport ; as he grew older, a spirit of serious inquiry was

cultivated, and it may be remarked that children are imbued with the love of discovery, and if they can be made to anticipate results, and understand premises, they will pursue knowledge with as much avidity as they do mere amusement.

Arthur had also been taught to pursue knowledge for itself, not merely to eclipse his brother men. The ambition to excel would never have carried him so fast or so far as the desire to know; for the one view is limitable, the other illimitable—the one often contents itself with the negative advantage derivable from the tardiness of an opponent; the other is satisfied with nothing short of the positive advantages derivable from the conquest of its object.

Arthur came home for the vacation with "all his blushing honours thick upon him," but with a modesty that blushed at their mention. If Mrs. Trevor could allow herself to feel preference, it was perhaps in favour of Arthur, who,



of all her children, most fully realized the high character it was her endeavour to form.

"Never," she cried, addressing her husband, after the young people had retired on the evening of Arthur's return—"Never has care and labour been better rewarded than that which I have bestowed on Arthur. Do you remember how you one time feared he would be vain? Is he not now as full of modesty as he is of merit?"

"It is but fair, my love," replied Mr. Trevor, "that I should indulge your natural exultation about your children, since you never betray it so as to awaken their vanity, or the world's envy. It is such mothers as you that are its best benefactors; and as they increase, will remodel it. All improvement must begin at the base; a good foundation is the first requisite, since no superstructure can be safe without it."

"I have adopted my father's principle," said Agnes, "and inculcated it. I have kept in view that character is formed for the individual.

Hence, I have left no avenue unguarded by which the character of my children might be affected; and they, conscious that they owe nothing to themselves, are grateful for being what they are—not vain; and aware that the same circumstance operates on others as on themselves, they are full of allowance—not exaction.”

“ But reverse the position. Suppose Marmion Beaucaire your son: he, feeling he owed nothing to himself, would not be sorry for being what he is, but content.”

“ A truth is a truth,” said Agnes; “ and the consequences can only be in conformity with it. Was Marmion my son, his character would be my fault, and his misfortune; he would not reason or act from an abstract principle, but from the character given him. His will now is as dominant in determining him to do evil as any conviction he could deduce from my axioms. Men act from motives arising out of circumstances and character, not from dogma or dicta

of any kind. Even the philosopher,—when has his practice anything to do with his theory? Appeal to the prating philanthropist,—if generosity form no part of his character, shall you extract a guinea from his pocket?”

“My love, you have always beat me at argument,” said Mr. Trevor, smiling. “I am not, you see, like the Vicar of Wakefield, who could not have endured the idea of such an admission. But if our dispute be not concluded, let it at least be adjourned, that we may retire to rest; for we are all to be stirring with the lark to-morrow morning, to pack and prepare for our visit to the Isle of Wight.”

“Be it so, my dear Arthur,” replied his wife. “You have checked me in time. I was growing too warm—one of my irradicable faults. But if you cannot cure, you mitigate them, and avert their consequences by your judgment and good-nature. How unlike Beaucaire have you been! In such indifference as *he* exhibits, all *her* faults may find a palliative.”

“ Assuredly,” replied Trevor, returning the pressure of the fond hand that had taken his. “ Marriage takes a woman from the world at large,—from the lesser world of social connexions ; it shuts out the influence of the many to consecrate her to one. Is not the indemnity of care and attention due in proportion to the privation caused ! Perhaps had Lady Beaucaire known the fostering of anxious love, the gauds that now lure had never engrossed her mind.”

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## CHAPTER IX.

A BRIGHT day had terminated in a stormy evening when the Trevors entered Portsmouth, where they put up for the night, resolving to cross to the Isle of Wight on the following morning.

Mrs. Trevor's first care was to see her younger children supplied with supper and placed in bed ; while tea was ordered for the rest, consisting of Arthur, and his brother Hubert, a youth about thirteen, her husband and herself.

While these preparations were going forward, Mr. Trevor and his younger son, notwithstanding a high wind and a cloudy sky, walked out into the town.

"What do you remember as remarkable about Portsmouth, Hubert ?" said his father.

"That it is the birth-place of Jonas Hanway, the philanthropist," replied the youth.

Mr. Trevor smiled at an answer so characteristic of a descendant of Dr. Clare, just as a rough man, of seafaring aspect touched his hat to them; and Mr. Trevor recollected a man, of whom, many years ago, when at Portsmouth, he had known something. To the inquiry as to how he had fared, the rough-voiced speaker replied—

"I am a stranded wreck, Sir. I have survived all that belonged to me, and have, as the saying is, only myself to care for. But who cares for himself that has no one that cares for him?"

"Not much, I should think," said Mr. Trevor. "The relations of life alone make life sweet."

"But I never thought of that, sir, as long as I had them."

"A common case. It is one of the most habitual errors of man to possess blessings with-

worst part of the price. I was harsh enough to that poor lad of mine, and not much kinder to his mother; but I never thought so, till I laid her in the churchyard yonder, and heard that he had found a deeper grave in the South Sea." He drew his hand across his eyes, before he added, "Sir, when they were dead, I would have died again and again myself to have been able to have called them back, and convinced them that my heart was not as hard and as cold as they thought it."

"I wish," observed Mr. Trevor, "that you would give the lesson of your experience to all you can, both above, below, and in your own

walk of life. Domestic rudeness, if not unkindness, is a very common sin, and a very great

Well, sir, as I can never make atonement to them that are gone, I have tried to ease my conscience by being quite another man to what I was; and I believe I have not done an unkind thing, or said a cross word to man, woman, or child these ten years. And I have been able to do some little good too—I saved a poor soul that was near perishing at sea last year—I saved him at the risk of my own life, and that wipes something off the account I have against myself.”

“ I think I may use the divine words and say, ‘ your sins are forgiven you,’ ” said Mr. Trevor. “ Your fault originated rather in rough habits than a rude nature. There is no happiness present or perspective among those that do not respect each other’s feelings, and seek to promote each other’s happiness.”

“ My dear father,” said Hubert, “ do not



let this man be lonely any longer; take him into your service. I am sure<sup>b</sup> he would be happy among our people."

Mr. Trevor smiled at the suggestion. "We must see more of this man first," he replied. "Besides I do not see that he is lonely, as you express it. Now that he has learned to sympathize with his kind and assist them, he is less alone than when he had the particular ties that he laments, since now he feels and acts as a brother to any and all of the human race."

"Hark!" exclaimed the man; "those are signal guns—and see the platform is covered with people. There is a vessel in distress! God help those on board! and Jack Roberts shall help them," he added, running forward.

Hubert let go his father's arm, caught hold of Roberts' jacket, ran on with him, and was in a moment lost in a crowd of people. The darkness had suddenly increased, and a low, rumbling sound of thunder was heard heavily in the distance, as if the spirit of the storm was approaching.

Much time for anticipation was not allowed. The rain burst into a deluge, and the wind came in furious gusts, shaking the tall masts of the vessels in the harbour, that swayed and quivered like forest trees. The thunder came nearer and nearer, every burst occurring at shorter intervals, while the red lightning, glaring along the murky sky, gave gleams of a vessel driven before the landward wind, with the inevitable certainty of coming ashore.

Mr. Trevor vainly endeavoured to regain view of Hubert; and, though he might have despaired of making himself heard, kept reiterating his name. The crowd, as well as the storm, increased, and if it had not been that his anxiety for his son was so eagerly excited, few would have given more intense sympathies to the sufferers on board the wreck.

Some boats put off, but it was thought to little purpose, it being deemed impossible they could live in such a sea. The noble fellows that made the hazardous venture were cheered by

the people from the shore, though the violence of the wind, probably, prevented the sounds reaching those they were designed to encourage.

However hard it may be to move sympathy for distress by appeal or representation, the actual and active presence of calamity generally searches the heart; the sluggard then bestirs himself—the apathetic feel the palpitations of a commiserating interest; and, perhaps, there is no wretch that would not resign his favourite vice in favour of the unfortunate, except the coward and the miser; *they* are branded to the core—nothing but death erases the interdiction that fear and avarice writes on the human heart.

A period of time, that to Mr. Trevor appeared an age, measured as it was by anxiety, was at length broken by a stir among the people, and sounds that, from inaudible murmurs, rose into shouts, and he became sensible that one of the boats had come back, having rescued some people from the wreck. The crowd gave

way, and after a while the flashing torch of a man that was clearing a passage, threw its light upon Hubert. He was supporting a young girl in his arms, who hung, as if insensible, over his shoulder.

Mr. Trevor saw—inquired no more; he gained the side of his son, and ere long the rescued creature was conveyed to the inn, and committed to the care of Mrs. Trevor. Hubert was made to change his clothes, and his father, accompanied by Arthur, went forth to ascertain if any other persons had been preserved, and to administer to their distresses if such were the case. The accounts they gained were consolatory; it was hoped that the greater part of the passengers and crew had been saved. They had been kindly taken to various abodes in the neighbourhood, and Mr. Trevor and his son returned home, for the rest and refreshment of which they stood so much in need, after exposure to the inclemency of that eventful night.

Supper was scarcely over ere a message was

brought to Mr. Trevor, that a man begged to see him; he was desired to come up, and Robarts appeared.

"I have come, sir, for two reasons," he cried, as he closed the door and bowed, "first to inquire after your gallant son."

"Thank you, Robarts," replied Mr. Trevor, "he is a-bed, and I hope asleep, with the blessing of God upon his head. Sit down, and tell me what you will take a glass of."

Robarts obeyed, placed his oilskin hat beneath the chair on which he seated himself, drank to the health of all present, and resumed speaking.

"*My* boat, sir, was the first that put off, and *your* son was the first that jumped into her. Put him to the sea, sir, he'll be an admiral if ever there was one—so fine a spirit should be nothing less."

Mr. Trevor smiled, while Agnes drew nearer to Robarts, as he proceeded to describe the whole course of the event which terminated in

the rescue of the young lady from the peril that encompassed her.

"But," said Arthur, who rejoiced in his brother's generous courage, and yet felt a secret wish that he had been allowed an opportunity of proving the same in behalf of the young and interesting stranger, "you said you came here for two reasons, you have as yet told us of but one, what is the other?"

"Why, sir, I own I ought to have thought of that first; but your brave brother has got uppermost in my head, and now that all the poor creatures are safe, we begin to think less of them, than of the to-do there has been about them. But, in fact, sir, I come to enquire after the young thing Master Hubert saved; for there's a poor creature that I have given shelter in my cabin that is taking on so about her, that I believe she would come here herself, if it was not that she is watching beside one that will not need her watching long."

“ A passenger from the wreck also ? ” asked Mrs. Trevor with the quickest interest.

“ Yes, madam ; it is the last storm she’ll ever bide, poor thing ; and I fancy, some how or other, it’s not the first by many that she has braved. She is dying, madam, as surely as I live. Her senses have not yet returned ; and, perhaps, it will be as well they never may, for the woman with her says she has lost everything she was worth in the world. She has not lost the heart of a faithful friend though. I never saw a creature grapple to another as this foreign-looking woman does to the dying lady. Her strength must lie in her heart ; for she has gone through enough to sink a man-of-war, and yet for herself she seems to feel or care nothing.”

Mrs. Trevor’s eyes filled with tears ; death and devotion were images that could not be presented to her without awakening deep emotion. She felt how poorly these unfortunates

could be accommodated in the home of a man like Robarts, she resolved to visit them immediately, and ascertain if it might not be practicable to remove them.

While Arthur went to procure a conveyance, Agnes returned to her own room to get a cloak in which to wrap herself. Approaching the bed on which the rescued girl had been laid, she paused to look at her. Never had she beheld a creature so perfectly beautiful. Her head had fallen gently back so as to disclose the whole of her sweet face, which touched, as it was, with an expression of suffering, appealed to the deepest pulses of Mrs. Trevor's heart. The lips were parted, and on them alone some faint colour was discernible; the long lashes lay on a cheek as tintless as the lids they fringed, around which there was a hollowness that appeared to be the effect of suffering. Tangled as were the tresses of that young head, some ringlets, still rich in native curl and silky texture, fell over her white neck,



which, in the restlessness of her slumber, she had partially uncovered. Her forehead was high and finely arched, betokening thought ; her hands were small and beautifully formed ; they were clasped upon her breast, as if the unconscious creature was praying in her sleep.

Mrs. Trevor tore herself away, and accompanied by Arthur, for she had insisted on leaving Mr. Trevor behind, she hastened to the habitation of Robarts. She found it, as she expected, a very humble dwelling ; but she allowed herself little time for observation, as she hurried into the inner room, where she was told she should find the dying lady and her attendant. The place was dimly lighted, and when, gently opening the door, Agnes stepped within the chamber, she perceived a truckle-bed, over which the figure of a tall woman, in a dark dress, was bending. The coloured handkerchief that bound her head caught Mrs. Trevor's eye, as she recollected that Robarts had spoken of her as a foreigner, and Agnes was

preparing to address her in French, when she rose and turned round.

No second glance was necessary; at the first Mrs. Trevor recognised Hagar; with the rapidity of light Agnes turned her eyes to the low uncurtained bed—it found *her* that it too surely sought—Magdalene Melburn lay there—and dying!

Agnes fell on her knees, as if suddenly struck down by some impending weight, and clasped her hands; the very articulation of the joints spoke agony, for the hands were wrung with a tension, arising from the rack of feeling, incapable of any other expression.

The intensity of Mrs. Trevor's emotion arrested Hagar's attention; but not till she arose, and the fear of fainting made her throw off the bonnet and the wraps in which she had sheltered herself, did the Jewess recognise the friend of Magdalene. Then came on both sides the attempt to speak, the choking hysterical sensation, and, at last, the tears, that at

once relieved and expressed the mingled agony and joy of meeting. It was a solace to Agnes, that even at the eleventh hour, she had been admitted to her friend ; it was a solace to Hagar that such a one had appeared to share the awful duty she saw before her. But that they should meet—o see Magdalene reach the consummation of her suffering—to close the painful pilgrimage of life under such circumstances, without having experienced any atoning happiness, any recompense, any acknowledgment, was an agony almost insupportable.

“ She sleeps,” said Hagar in a low voice.

“ I fear she will sleep on, till sleep will resolve itself into death,” said Mrs. Trevor.

“ No ; she has become gradually more conscious ; she will wake once more. Her spirit cannot so lightly lay down its burthen. She has a child—O that child——” and Hagar was about suddenly to leave the room, as she now became sensible of the voice of Robarts in the next ; but Mrs. Trevor stayed her.

“ That child is with me.”

“ With you!—alive?—well?—safe?” exclaimed Hagar breathlessly.

“ Yes, Hagar; safe as if with you or her mother. Alive, and well enough to taste refreshing sleep. Fear not, sorrow not for her—she is henceforth my daughter.”

Hagar’s dark eyes were raised as if she marvelled at the mercy of Heaven and blessed it; her hands were pressed together, and her soul seemed to commune with itself, for she uttered no sound. From this abstraction she was awakened by a movement in the bed. She turned to it, but Mrs. Trevor bent instantly forward, and uttered some gentle sounds.

Mrs. Melburn’s eyes unclosed; they appeared fearfully prominent, and though fixed, as if gazing intently, they evidently saw nothing: gradually sight and perception came, and she turned her gaze from object to object in the room.

"Where am I?" she at length exclaimed, as if slowly waking from a dream. "Is the storm past? What means this stillness? I do not hear the wind. Why is all so quiet? And Magdalene—where is Magdalene?"

"Abed, asleep," replied Agnes.

Mrs. Melburn attempted to raise herself; but failing to do so, she still fixed her gaze on Agnes, and, with the action of one bewildered, put back her hair from her own brow.

"You are not Hagar!" she cried. "Hagar! where is Hagar?" she added, as with a sudden exertion, prompted by the strength of apprehension, she succeeded in half raising herself on the bed.

"Here!" cried Hagar, throwing herself on her knees; "here am I, Magdalene Melburn, ready to die as I have lived for you."

The dying hand was stretched towards her, it was taken, kissed, and pressed to Hagar's bosom.

"Now, where is Magdalene?" asked the anxious mother. "I shall sleep again soon—but first I must see Magdalene."

Again she was assured her child was safe and in repose. Hope and fear, like light and darkness, struggled in her countenance; her eyes rested inquiringly on Mrs. Trevor, and then turned to Hagar.

"You have never deceived me," feebly exclaimed the sufferer. "But why is she not here? Where is she?"

"With Agnes Lennox," cried Mrs. Trevor, striking a chord of past recollection.

"Ah! how is that possible? I loved that name, but it is another name now;" and a perplexed look evinced the struggle of fading memory.

"Trevor," said Agnes.

"Yes, yes, Trevor—Agnes Trevor! O that I were with her, or she with me!"

"She is with you; Magdalene—dear Magdalene, do you not know me?" A sudden shock

passed through Mrs. Melburn's frame, as if her nerves had been touched too rudely. She gazed intently upon Agnes, till a smile, strange and wild, broke over her features, and then falling forward, she wept like an infant.

Mrs. Melburn revived so much soon after, and partook so readily of refreshment, that, ere morning came, Mrs. Trevor expressed a hope that she might be removed. She was soon convinced she had suffered herself to hope too much: nature had only rallied to meet the struggle of death.

The light of morning came through the poorly-curtained window, and streamed on the pale brow and humble pallet of Magdalene. The prompt attention of Mrs. Trevor had procured from the inn better covering and additional pillows, and, propped and supported by these, Magdalene sat up, asking at every interval for her daughter.

As soon as the morning was somewhat advanced, Hagar, under the escort of Arthur,

repaired to the inn. She was introduced to the chamber of the young being who was so soon to be motherless ; and thence she conducted her to the hovel where lay her dying and expecting parent.

A radiance of more than mortal light kindled the countenance of the expiring mother as her child approached. Stretching out her arms, she folded the weeping girl to her bosom.

"Do not mourn, Magdalene. All that are born must die. I am vouchsafed a solace I did not dare to hope. Heaven has provided my child a better mother than I could be. Agnes Trevor, in the past night your promises have stayed my soul in life ; repeat them now, and gratefully I shall resign myself to my Maker !"

Magdalene clung convulsively to her mother ; she heard not the kind and affectionate assurances of her new friend : one wild fear absorbed all her faculties, chained all her attention. The sole survivor of Mrs. Melburn's children, Magdalene felt as if she had nothing in the world but:



her mother. It is true her father yet lived—but how or where? His desertion had left his family to disgrace—destitution: Magdalene had shared distress and suffered privation with her injured parent; and it is such circumstances that beyond all others tighten the bands of attachment. There are pleasant memories attached to the banquet and the ball; and we fail not to recall, with a smile, those that then shared our pleasure; but we think more of the scene than the society: far other is it with the recollection of meetings or associations in which want and misery tried the breast of virtue, and found it proof. The mind of Magdalene was stored with instances of her mother's cheerful fortitude and unrepining patience. With the ardent and sanguine spirit that distinguishes youth, Magdalene had ever promised herself the power of consoling her mother's age, and recompensing her sufferings. How ill, therefore, could she support the idea that death was about to deny that sole solace for their past afflictions!

"For my sake, my child, show more fortitude," cried Mrs. Melburn, with the energy and composure consistent with her character. "Often ere now, Magdalene, have you cheered me in sorrow, and soothed me in suffering; and now, when all my sufferings and sorrows are about to end, will you continue and renew them? I am only arrived at that stage to which, all my life, I have tended; and it had been well, had it been consistent with the decreeing power that all must obey, but none can comprehend, had I gained it much sooner. Sit down, my child. I must husband my strength. I wish the lamp to burn steadily as long as it may serve you."

Even death seemed to succumb before the spirit of Mrs. Melburn. Faded as she was, much of her former beauty rekindled in this last struggle. She had always been above the world; and now, with the assurance of soon attaining a better, she more than ever valued it at its mere worth.

"I have endeavoured throughout your life,

my love," she cried, after some rest had renewed her strength, "to make you perceive the inseparable connexion between virtue and happiness, between vice and misery. My time is too short to allow me to say as much as I wish. I can but tell you the results of my experience, and you must make your own deductions. I have had no ordinary share of sorrow, yet I have never been utterly miserable, and often perfectly happy. I do not fear to die, nor desire to live: I forgive, all who have injured me—Magdalene, my love, I charge you especially with my forgiveness to your father. I have a prescience,"—and her voice now grew tremulous,—“that he will one day need, and O, let him find your succour. Remember that he *is* your father, and fly to him if he call on you. I commit you to the joint care of Hagar and Agnes Trevor—next to my God, I trust in *them*. I have two axioms I would have graven on your heart—Depend on yourself—be grateful for all good. The great Athenian asked, Why was Philip always fortu-

nate? Because, he added, he took the field himself. Thousands of years have not diminished the force of these admonitions when applied to the circumstances of life——” A sudden spasm seized Mrs. Melburn; the power of speech forsook her. Each one present was prompt to administer such relief as was deemed best. Again pain passed into exhaustion; and, pale and palpitating, the dying sufferer rested her head upon the bosom of her kneeling child.

“Magdalene—Hagar—Agnes!” she with difficulty exclaimed, —“We shall meet——again——” Articulate word she never spoke more; but long after there was language in her eye—the language of devotion and affection. When the spirit parted, one hand was in Hagar’s, one in that of Agnes; while the arms of Magdalene circled the sufferer’s form, and on that young bosom the head bowed, and the last sigh was breathed.

Though Magdalene had never witnessed

death before, she was sensible when all was over: the position she had long and painfully retained, she had no longer power to support, but fainting, she was caught in Mrs. Trevor's arms.

To sustain the living, not to sorrow over the dead, Agnes felt was the part she was now called on to act. She bore the bereaved girl into the next room, which was occupied by Arthur and Roberts: placing her in a large easy chair, (an accommodation the place fortunately afforded,) she desired Roberts to hasten to the inn, and procure the best conveyance with the utmost despatch, while Arthur aided his mother in supporting and restoring the afflicted Magdalene. When she revived, she looked up into the kind, commiserating face of Agnes; she read its silent eloquence, and gratefully kissed the hands in which her own were pressed. They were not both Mrs. Trevor's—one was her son's; but in the anguish of the moment, Magdalene so little heeded who was supporting her, that, conscious only that she *was* supported, she sunk

against his breast, as recurring faintness overcame her.

"Poor Hagar! Go to *her*, madam," said Magdalene; "I am well; I am strong—*she* is alone—alone—with her that can no longer sustain her!"

A gush of tears came to Magdalene's relief. Mrs. Trevor looked at her son, and then returned to the chamber of death. She found Hagar seated on the floor: she had put off her shoes, and her hair fell loose over her shoulders; but this seemed rather the work of memory—a mechanical recollection of the custom of her nation—than grief or mourning; for a species of torpid insanity seemed to have seized her.

A long period of suffering had tried Hagar's strength; the last week or two of the voyage, (during which wreck had been anticipated with worse results than followed,) the wreck itself,—the apprehended loss of Magdalene—the suffering, and now the death, of Mrs. Melburn, were

all more than her mind could bear. With the fortitude of devoted affection, she had struggled as long as she had aught to struggle for : when the stay was gone, the spirit it sustained sunk too,—and sunk at once.

Mr. Trevor and Hubert came with Robarts on his return. Ere mid-day, the mourners were removed to the inn, and placed under suitable care. Soon after, a hearse was seen moving slowly from the cabin ; it bore all that remained of the once beautiful and ever estimable Magdalene Melburn. Mrs. Trevor had instantly resolved that her departed friend should rest with kindred ashes ; that her tomb should rise where her name was honoured,—among those that still remembered her virtues, and would feel a melancholy satisfaction in weeping over her ashes. Proper measures were accordingly taken, and directions given for the mournful journey, which was to terminate the earthly pilgrimage of one whose allotment here can only be explained by reference to an hereafter. Phi-

losophy may satisfy itself that vice arises from the inevitable necessity of the wretched structure of society; it knows too that every crime is pregnant with its own punishment; and, revolting at the idea of an eternity of torment, as the decree of a just and benevolent God against a being whose duration of error has been, comparatively, but as an instant, it can consign the wicked unto death, and trust there be, for them, no resurrection. But with those that have sinned little, and suffered much,—who have endured penalties that another's crimes have purchased—who have sowed the seed, but never been allowed to reap the harvest—who have lived in hope, but died without fruition,—can philosophy contemplate them, and deny the immortality of the soul? If there be a belief beautiful and beatifying, it is the belief of the eternal life of the good, and the everlasting reunion of the attached!

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## CHAPTER X.

A DAY or two after Mrs. Melburn's death, a stranger introduced himself to Mr. Trevor. He stated his name to be Ernest Malfort, and that he was one of the individuals rescued from the late wreck. This account of himself immediately interested the person whom he addressed, the more that he perceived he was a foreigner, and learned that he had lost, in that fatal event, all the property of which he had been possessed. ¶ Whatever truth there may be in the common censure that charges the English with being an unsocial people, a counterpoise may fairly be afforded them in the friendly facility with which they yield themselves to foreigners. The professor of every clime finds patronage in England, and unfortunately the pretender too: while the claims of a fellow-countryman are

narrowly scanned, and often coldly entertained, the title of the foreigner is taken for granted and warmly supported. Nor does the consciousness that the reverse of this practice exists everywhere throughout the Continent tend to make the English more kind to their own countrymen, or more cautious regarding strangers.

Malfort was about forty years of age, but looked rather younger. He was about the middle size, his figure clumsy, and his demeanour ungraceful; his shoulders had that roundness rarely perceptible in any that have not been subjected to early and continued labour. His hands were coarse and large, and his air had a mixture of clownishness and cringing, as if these were the original base of his manner, on which some intercourse with society, and attention, had grafted a species of timid politeness. His face presented a singular combination of intellectual and sensual expression. He had fine light hair, a well-formed head; a forehead smooth, white, and expansive;

a complexion clear and delicate, which excitement soon heightened to a bloom ; his eyes might not be termed bright, but they were of transparent clearness, and of an ingenuous, mild expression : here all personal advantages ended, for the colour of the eyes were of that neutral and greenish tint usually seen in the decreed optics of a cat ; his lashes, though long, were very light ; his nose hooked ; his mouth large and particularly ugly, protruding somewhat like the jaw of an ape. It is said every human face bears a resemblance to some creature or other of the brute creation. Malfort was strikingly like the deer, having an expression singularly indicative of a timid and unsettled character, associated with a quickness seemingly derived as much from habit as from nature.

If love soon betrays itself, so does antipathy. Malfort instantly perceived that if he had impressed Mr. Trevor favourably, such was far from being the case with his wife. He saw there was much in her for him to fear, and little.

to hope ; and certainly an unfortunate prepossession immediately marked Malfort down in the worst latitude of the map of her mind. She thought him too humble for an honest, high-minded man—too cautious a speaker for an undesigning one. Mr. Trevor, who deemed that she mixed strong prejudices with her good sense, did not, in this instance, allow himself to be biassed by her judgment ; he reflected that Malfort was a foreigner, in circumstances of destitution, and these he thought might well induce the depression that, in her eyes, appeared abject. To Malfort's immediate necessity Mr. Trevor ministered a trifle, sufficient to meet the bare necessities of life, till the time at which he appointed Malfort to meet him in London. Perhaps Mrs. Trevor's opinion, added to his own knowledge of the value of money, diminished his sympathy for the stranger, and the offering he made to his necessities. Of the lavish generosity so liberally dispensed in fiction, little is known in real life, and it may ever

be remarked that the moneyed man is a close calculator.

A sudden call of business obliged Mr. Trevor to return immediately to London, where he was soon waited on by Malfort. Upon further intercourse an inexplicable something deterred Mr. Trevor from offering him, as he had designed, employment in his own house, for which, from Malfort's account of himself, he was highly qualified. He appeared, however, daily at Broad-street, was entertained with hospitality, and, though expressing little, appeared pleased and grateful. He evinced the latter by those little nameless attentions which so certainly gain on self-love, because they appear to flow from the personal interest we excite. While Mr. Trevor was in this state of indecision, and Malfort in this state of expectation, Mr. Coverley came to town ; his business lay in the city, and he accepted the accommodation of Mr. Trevor's house.


Malfort almost immediately ingratiated him-

self with the old man, who listened with interest to the representations made in the stranger's behalf by their friendly entertainer. Mr. Coverley now mentioned that he had lost his faithful dependent, Teppet, and it instantly occurred that no better substitute for him could be found than Malfort presented. Mr. Trevor exerted himself to confirm Mr. Coverley in this opinion, and having done so, he communicated to Malfort his success; assured him he would find the service easy, and the emolument liberal, with the contingency of securing a very warm friend.

But matters did not proceed as smoothly as Mr. Trevor had anticipated and led Mr. Coverley to expect. Malfort stated, in reply to the proposal made to him, that he had at length received communications from his friends—that, in consequence, the aspect of his affairs was changed—that a new field and numerous connexions had been opened to him—that he was overwhelmed

with engagements, and perplexed to choose among the appointments offered to him. The invitations to Broad-street, once greedily accepted, were now, with apparent reluctance, declined. Still, however, Malfort made frequent but brief visits ; and some little tribute, some trifling attention in favour of his friends, ever appeared to be the motive of his call.

Mr. Coverley, unaccustomed to disappointment, and impatient of opposition, became importunate for Malfort's services. To find an object least attainable just as you become most sensible of its value, is, perhaps, the greatest of all spurs to the desire of possession. Mr. Coverley, whose imagination remained a very active faculty, conceived a hundred advantages would arise to him if he could secure the services of Malfort. Proposal led to importunity, and ultimately to entreaty, conjoined with advanced offers of remuneration ; and at length Malfort was won over, and adroitly contrived to.



appear to confer a favour, while he in fact accepted a benefit—to affect sacrifice, while he in reality gained security.

Soon after this arrangement was made, Malfort was introduced to Marmion Beaucaire, now fast approaching his majority, but who had long run riot in all the privileges of manhood. Mr. Coverley retained all his pride in his distinguished protégé: the elevation, political and pecuniary, to which Sir Ralph had attained—the eclat of Lady Beaucaire, a leader in the frivolous throng of fashion—much as they gratified the affectionate and splenetic feelings of the old bachelor, faded to comparative insignificancy before the universal acknowledgment that Marmion was the finest young man of the age, and destined to be the greatest. Nothing so surely pleased Mr. Coverley as the resemblance that flattery often pretended to perceive between him and his grand nephew; and all Marmion's deviations were palliated, as dotage drew on the past, and exclaimed with



exultation, not shame, "Ah ! at his age I was just such another !"

But while Marmion was the envy and admiration of the crowd, and the glory of his connexion, he was far from happiness. He came into society radiant with every advantage nature could yield or wealth confer. He appeared one of those that might defy fortune, because predestined to meet success ; but how many threads, like the cords that confined Gulliver, tie down the strong and perplex the proud, which none beyond themselves know to exist, and of which none but themselves know the pain and pressure !

Marmion and his father, if not decidedly at variance, were not on amicable terms ; the career of extravagance into which the former showed a disposition to run, not merely alarmed the knight as a moralist, but affected him still more as an economist. Ambition had first led Sir Ralph to seek wealth as a means, but it gradually became an end ; if avarice had not

yet supervened, it was advancing with the sure and silent tide of time. Mr. Coverley's liberality, in relieving Sir Ralph of the principal expenditure of his splendid domestic establishment, seemed to produce no other effect than to animate him with a new spirit of economy; relieved of larger expenses, he looked into lesser ones with an anxiety to curtail even them. Great was Marmion's indignation when this spirit approached him; and at the very time that he was about to appeal for an enlarged allowance, Sir Ralph proceeded in no conciliatory manner, and Marmion was not one to make allowance or concession. The conduct adopted towards him he regarded as a continuance of the severity and despotism with which, even in infancy, he had been treated by his father, and from a spirit of rash revenge he resolved to rush into still deeper extravagance. If Marmion was capable of headlong violence, he was also capable of deliberate deceit. There is no wickedness of which deception does not

make a part ; for crime courts concealment, and can buy it at no less expense. Marmion, therefore, carefully hid from his uncle the excesses into which he ran, and made attacks on his purse by a circuitous route, through Lady Beaucaire, who thus continued to be an agent to her son's undoing ; but even these resources could not supply the continued demands of an unlimited, uncalculated expenditure, and Marmion was not slow in seeking other and more questionable means for raising supplies.

The facilities of credit afforded to youths of fortune are fertile sources of future misery ; which rest not with the originator, but extend frequently to succeeding generations. Large debts and accruing involvements soon sat like an incubus on the breast of Marmion, and in a sort of desperate gaiety he sought to fling it from him. The delusive wealth he had gained by bills and borrowing had flown like wildfire ; the bills had been renewed, the interest on the money he had raised was accumulating, and his

expenses increased, for he had no lack of associates, who kept him to the career on which he had entered. Some were united to him in equal companionship, and the sympathy of common circumstances; some hung upon him to share the spoil that dissipation scatters, and to take advantage of the opportunities it loses; besides servants and worse slaves, who, though cast off, must be kept up, and whose silence must be bought, when their service is no longer desired. Thus the chain of folly and crime links many who are little suspected of connexion, and he that sits feasting with the sovereign is often held in fear by the meanest among the subjects. To a mind thus harassed and oppressed, dissipation becomes absolutely necessary to drive away the demon of reflection, always most willing to intrude when most unavailing. Accounts unexamined, expenses uninvestigated, leave loopholes for fraud, into which it never fails to creep, and, like the white ant of India, eat its covert and destruc-

tive way through all that may remain of the injured fabric.

Morally and materially Marmion was a splendid ruin; the former was suspected, but the latter was not; therefore he was still welcomed by the wealthy and courted by the fair. His proud indifference acted as a stimulant on the crowd, and submission and interest everywhere pandered to his arrogance.

Many a manœuvring maid and mother had desired to assist him in the settlement of his fortune and affections, and it is to be feared that the first was the primary point; but he resisted the machinations that threatened him with matrimony, notwithstanding that he was prone to yield himself to the fascination that immediately precedes it.

Suddenly, however, there appeared in the horizon of fashion a star of no common magnitude. Fame heralded her coming, and Esther Mezrack, the daughter of Baron Mezrack, was proclaimed as a beauty of the first order. The

more experienced, who had seen many a bubble blown and break, attributed the greatness of her reputation to the weight of her father's purse. He was a foreigner, and, it was said, a Jew, but Esther was by birth an Englishwoman, as had her mother been.

Marmion's curiosity was excited by the reports of Esther's beauty; but he was even yet more moved by the details of her character, of which unsurpassed pride was asserted to be the leading characteristic. Though educated principally in England, she had been brought out at Rome; and there, according to rumour, had rejected princes. Receiving universal homage, she was declared capable of no return but cold courtesy, and was said to move in society with ill-concealed disdain and conscious superiority.

This was a triumph that Marmion conceived worthy of him; such requisites his imagination demanded in his wife; he cared not how proud, how commanding to the rest of the world, so that she bowed to him.

Esther was a woman, in whom he felt he could feel pride, and that was an essential base to all his affections. With all his hauteur, and apparent independence, he was the veriest slave of opinion ; a touch of ridicule, the consciousness of any incongruity appertaining to himself, would jar his feelings painfully ; while the laudatory whisper of a passing stranger could harmonize them.

Miss Mezrack's first appearance in England was in a numerous, yet a select circle, to which Marmion had the *entrée*. No people are more attached to old customs, yet more eagerly pursue new sights, than the English. Novelty with them supersedes everything, and the newest face, like the last fashion, is ever most admired. But Esther Mezrack needed, as little as she sought, all adventitious aid. Marmion had neither desire nor intention of meeting her among the crowd ; he, therefore, stood aside to canvass her. All that he had imagined was surpassed when she appeared.

She seemed raised above the world in spirit as well as splendour. There are few morally great enough to know the first exaltation ; there are few even great enough for the gewgaw grandeur of civil greatness. How rarely does the regal ermine enfold the grace of majesty, even when, in common parlance, it is worn by the grace of God ! How rarely does crown or coronet press a brow, which, divested of the halo these shed round it, would beam nobility ! Not so Esther Mezrack : she was an incarnation of that majestic beauty on which nature stamps imperial ; which is so rarely issued from her mint, that we might deem it, as it seems, formed in other than the common mould.

She was the tallest woman Marmion had ever seen, and could have been little beneath his own stature. Her air and carriage were queenly ; he perceived the pride for which she was reputed, but he did not deem it excessive : we must remember he saw it exercised on others, he did not feel it himself. She was



fair; but he had never seen a skin so beautiful: it was a mellow, not a dazzling white, and deepened into a soft colour on her cheek. Her eyes were deep blue, and brilliant, with black lashes and brows; her hair was black, and braided with the richest pearls, the only ornament she wore; for her dress was, like the quakers', proudly simple, proclaiming that the form adorned the dress, and not the dress the form. Description conveys little idea of countenance: Esther's was elegant in contour, and perfect in feature, but might with advantage have possessed more softness and variety of expression.

Marmion satisfied himself that the object was worthy his aim, and drew silently and unperceived away. As he had expected, his hostess inquired for him, and, in lieu of himself, his character was brought forward. Much was said for and against him, but all tended to establish him in Esther's mind as a remarkable young man, and thus his absence secured him

more of her attention than his presence might have done.

Marmion wished to anticipate conquest before he attempted victory; hitherto his had been a Parthian progress, but, probably, those he had selected for attack had secured the achievement. Now it was Greek meeting Greek, and, though habitually confident, he would not advance, on the present occasion, without engaging every circumstance he could command in his favour. Esther was older, by four or five years, than Marmion, at their period of life an advantage on her side; the youth is proud of the conquest of a woman older than himself, as the aged man is vain of having captivated one much younger.

In her rides, at the Opera, and everywhere in society, Marmion appeared in the presence of Miss Mezrack without being presented. He wore his most brilliant looks, his most finished manner, that mixture of serious ease and graceful gaiety, which few blended so happily as

himself. But he was like a meteor, scarce seen ere he vanished again ; everybody seemed to attract, but nobody to detain him ; and it became the general feeling, that Mr. Beaucaire was more fascinating than ever, but so universal a favourite that no one saw enough of him. Miss Mezrack was surrounded by a crowd of adorers, of whom she thought nothing, while she frequently asked herself, why was Marmion not among them ? It has been cleverly remarked, that no people are so astonished at the sight of a giant as the very tall, though it might be imagined this feeling would more strongly exist among the very short : it is accounted for by the circumstance that the little are always accustomed to look up, hence they feel no change in being obliged to look a little higher ; but the lofty, on the contrary, are always accustomed to look down, and feel it strange when obliged to reverse this habit. Thus felt Esther Mezrack, when, habituated as she was to see all approach her with homage,

she beheld one being walk away, or rather walk about, with indifference. She listened to all she heard of him with eagerness; and was particularly pleased when she was presented to Lady Beaucaire, who had not been in town when Miss Mezrack first appeared.

The proud heart of Esther palpitated when she entered her ladyship's mansion for the first time. It was a musical *soirée*, and Lady Beaucaire was ambitious of being one of the few at whose house the haughty beauty not only shed the lustre of her smiles, but dispensed the charm of her song and musical skill. Her voice, like her form, was of the first order, and its cultivation had been her chief ambition. During her residence in Italy, her time had been principally devoted to the art, and her proficiency was deemed greater than any private individual had ever attained.

Her eye glanced around the distinguished circle into which she moved, but Marmion was

not among them. In a short time, however, he appeared, and Lady Beaucaire led him to Esther. Notwithstanding every effort, and neither were deficient in the art of veiling their feelings, there was an agitation in both mutually perceptible and mutually gratifying; it passed away, and was succeeded by a mutual desire to please; it has been justly said, that when this wish is sincere it is always successful. It was eminently the case in this instance. Esther was content to beam, not to blaze; and she needed only that to bring Marmion to her feet; while he, well read in all the lore of love, and full of the most impassioned admiration, prepared her to smile upon the tribute which atoned in depth for the tardiness with which it had been offered.

Esther had never sung as she sang that night. Marmion had placed her at the harp, and stood in undisguised admiration to listen to her. Had she been a merely vain woman, her

performance would have been spoiled; vanity would have fluttered her voice and fettered her form; but she was a proud woman, with strong passions and deep feelings. She felt the sentiment that had seized her soul; she felt *his* presence that inspired it,—of the circling crowd she thought nothing. With the air of chaste, yet warm devotion which she would have worn in her closet, and with a grace of attitude and expression that only *she* could wear, she swept the chords of the instrument, and called forth from it a tone that a master-hand only could awaken; then gently raising her head, her parted lips breathed a stream of music that spoke her soul. It was truth that gave more than ordinary power to her song that night: in the sweet language of poetry, in the still sweeter and more universal language of melody, she gave a flow to the voice of passion; and while it thrilled all, it transported one; for already there existed be-

tween her and Marmion that intercommunion, rapid as light, and subtile as air, by which mind acts on mind.

The remainder of that night was to him all delirium, to her all devotion. Love touched her heart for the first time, passion moved his pulses as they had never moved before ; she, in the secret chambers of her soul, consecrated herself to Marmion ; he, in the temple of his imagination, dedicated himself to Esther.

If there be a moment of exquisite bliss in the world, it is when the mind first awakens to the consciousness of mutual love. The light then let in upon the sanctuary of the breast reveals the treasure that had lain unprofitably hoarded ; it is dispensed to sparkle in the eye, to breathe in the genial smile. All the world wears suddenly a new aspect ; the creatures in it a new character ; for the sentiment within, like the sun, beautifies all it shines on. The harsh din of the chafferers in this mart of

traffic—of the rivals in this field of contention, fall unheeded on the ear of those, over whom, Hope, Faith, and Fancy, hover like angels, hallowing every thought, warding off all the dull realities of life, and placing the loving and loved under *taboo* to——delusion.

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## CHAPTER XI.

MARMION, now animated with his accustomed confidence, soon gained opportunity to plead his passion, and was transported by an assurance that it was returned. But his impatience received a check when he urged for an immediate marriage, and his pride a wound when he discovered the causes that necessitated postponement.

Esther was the child of Jewish parents; motives, into which it is not essential to inquire, had induced her father to seek naturalization, and he had vested extensive property in England. Esther, with the feeling of Scott's more amiable Rebecca, held her people the first on earth; to many, among whom, she felt the later nations were "as the gourd compared to the cedar." But filial reverence, and

her sex, forbade her giving too open evidence of the disdain with which she regarded the surrender of an ancient faith to new principles. To this silent struggle might be traced much of the haughtiness for which she was condemned. Her mind was engrossed by thoughts in which the common multitude could not sympathize; she was busy with old prejudices and new prospects: the scenes in which she mingled contained the pages of human nature, and she endeavoured to read them and decide. What the result might have been, had not the love of a Christian, if not Christian love, shone upon her, we may not assert. If Judaism was aggrieved and Christianity rejoiced; if the reasoner was led to exclaim—"O woman!" grief, joy, and judgment might pause and remember to what cause Popery may trace the loss of the people of England; to what cause their church may ascribe reformation; and with what far greater truth philosophy may cry "O King!"

Esther, in her girlhood, had been betrothed; circumstances of calamity had intervened, and separated the affianced, but the betrothment had not been annulled; and till she abjured her faith she was bound by its ordinances; and even if she quitted the tents of Israel, she would remain bound by the laws of courtesy and good feeling.

Thus, after the first delirious transport of Marmion's passion had been relieved by vows and eloquent protestations; after it had been soothed by the confession of the love that repaid him, he found himself placed under an interdiction.

"Not to *my* father, or *yours*; not to *my* people, or *your* people, must our love yet be known," cried Esther to her lover. "I was betrothed in childhood, as is often the custom of our nation, but it is not therefore that I cannot give you a virgin heart. Trust me but I do, and as true a one as ever beat. Tarry awhile," she added with a smile, "and when I tell thee,

thou shalt confess *me* in thine house, as I will *thee* in mine."

While Esther spoke, the power of her beauty, her voice, the accessories of splendour that surrounded her, all operated to deprive Marmion of the power of dispassionate judgment; she had an eloquence, too, and a tone of romance that shed a fascinating influence on all she uttered, and tinted with grandeur and grace the circumstances that she communicated.

"The love that is secret," she replied to his murmuring, "is more sacred than that which is avowed; it is an exclusive treasure, of which none may even know the sanctuary, but those to whom it is consecrated. The custom of men will in time render avowal necessary; but even then they may only guess how large and how deep-laid are the riches of our affections."

But when Marmion retired with his own thoughts; when he was apart from the intoxicating influence to which his reason yielded, he felt the force of the discrepant circumstances of

the engagement into which he had rushed. Again, however, they fled away before the spell of passion, and the presence of Esther. Unaccustomed to reflection, though thought came, it was never long entertained ; some rapid deductions his reason might make, but if his inclination opposed them, they were industriously banished. Marmion permitted no considerations long to compete with his passions ; he forgot or gave up the future good for the present gratification, and allowed neither the warnings of fear, nor the promises of hope to interfere with the prevailing whim.

He returned to college with this additional distraction : he sought, as usual, a refuge in dissipation ; it now somewhat changed its character ; but it was as unreflecting as ever, and as uninterrupted. Any pause invited dread and dejection ; it was only by keeping the bells upon the cap of folly continually ringing, that he drowned the warning voice that sought to admonish him of ruin. The calmness of mind

essential to the cultivation of intellect, he had never known ; the tranquillity that suited study would have invited review, and thus past folly forbade future amendment.

In the vicinity of Cambridge resided one who had often administered, in the way of usury, to Marmion's necessities. This man was a very aged Jew, and his name was Mezrack. So unreflecting was Marmion, that the coincidence of the name and faith of Esther never once struck him. She and the money-lender were assuredly the antithesis of each other. He looked as might the most sorrowful of the Israelites under the bondage of Egypt: his form was spare, his face furrowed, his dress coarse and simple. Yet to any but a being so superficial of observation, and so inconsequent in action as Marmion, the idea would have occurred ; for there is many a graft growing, while the original tree is falling to decay.

One evening Marmion rode out of the town,

and dispatching his groom upon some mission, told him to call on his return at old Mezrack's, whence, as Marmion was proceeding there, they might return to Cambridge. Having given these instructions, he turned in the direction of the Jew's house. He was well mounted; for Marmion was proud of his knowledge of horses, and really attached to Bruce, the gallant creature he rode. Though none were present to admire his horsemanship, Marmion provoked the mettle of his steed, when his ear was caught by a human voice.

“ ‘ Then were the horses' hoofs broken by means of the prancing, ’ ” said the Jew Mezrack, as he gained the side of Marmion, though at a careful distance.

“ What ! quoting Scripture, as usual, ” cried the young man, looking down on the Israelite. “ You might write yourself Rabbi, if riches and deep reading gave title to the high places of the synagogue.”

"BlaspHEME not," replied Mezrack. "I know and am known of the rich, and thou conceitest therefore I am one of them."

"Nay, I charge you not with self-knowledge," said the youth, with a sarcastic smile. "But I am again come unto thee in my necessities, Mezrack," he continued with mock gravity. Then, suddenly changing his tone, he added, "Summon some of your incomprehensible household, and let my horse be cared for; he is worth more shekels of silver than you would give to redeem your race, or, what you may think more of, your own soul."

"You are of Bethaven, which means the house of vanity," said Mezrack, "and you speak its rash speech."

"Aye, and of the house of Coverley and Beaucaire, as well," replied the youth, "which you judge to be a strong house, or its heir had found small countenance in yours."

Marmion dismounted; a person appeared, who led his horse away, and the Jew conducted



his guest into the house. A narrow, gloomy staircase led to a dusky chamber. Everything was antique of fashion, and of sombre appearance ; yet an impressive character prevailed not less in Mezrack's habitation than his person.

“ I shall wait here the return of my servant,” said Marmion, “ gone some miles further on a matter of business. Therefore, Mezrack, if you have not already wasted the last wine I sent you, produce it, and we will, with its aid, lighten business and this dull abode of yours.”

At the youth's bidding, the wine appeared. Pleasant it was to Mezrack, but essential to Marmion : the first took it as an enjoyment ; the latter as a stimulant. Beaucaire's spirits invariably sympathized with his finances : gold, not quicksilver, indicated the state of his moral atmosphere. There is a certain degradation insensibly associated with bad spirits, which make those affected by them conceal, if they cannot conquer, the morbid attack ; and they seek the excitement that will relieve it, less for the plea-

sure anticipated, than the pain to be escaped. Perhaps this phenomenon is based upon as certain facts as any in the history of nature. Misfortune, immorality, or physical disease, are all grounds of inferiority, and producers of morbid spirits, as prosperity, virtue, and health are the foundations of superiority, and producers of cheerfulness. The character of gloom or gladness, arising from these causes, varies according to the respective value of the causes, and are more distinctive marks among men, and more worthy to divide them into ranks and classes, than the divisions society has adopted.

Whatever were Marmion's faults and vices, and however, from the unalienable nature of evil, they led him to the mean errors of falsehood and deceit, he was essentially open to sympathy, prompt to communicate the secrets of his heart, credulous, confiding, and social. Perhaps in the whole circle of his associates, a more uncongenial companion than Mezrack could hardly be selected; yet, even to him, as

Marmion's spirits became soothed, if not elevated, he felt disposed to open his heart—and, in some measure, did so.

Mezrack was a singular character : while, in the way of trade, he was preying on this young man, the voice of humanity spoke within him, and inclined him to regard Marmion with feelings that, under more auspicious circumstances, might have warmed into deep kindliness. A Jew by birth, a Jew in much beside, knowledge had nevertheless opened to Mezrack many portals besides those of the mart and the synagogue. He had gone in at the more lofty gates of science and philosophy, and studied within the "Holy of Holies" of deep and divine meditation. Thus he held himself, and justly, a wiser man than many, yet he said in thought or speech unto no brother, "Thou fool." Who may dare to strike his foot on the earth beneath his tread, and call it barren? Had the sower been there, who knows what it might have borne? Mezrack had balanced opinions too

well to attach particular importance to creeds ; in all he perceived the intertissuing of truth and error, wisdom and weakness, and he said in his heart, if God bears with them, of a surety so may I. Early impression, however, retained its power over his mind, and his heart still cleaved to its early associations. He loved the persecuted people to which he belonged ; and while he was the extortioner to the extravagant Christian, he was the benefactor of the destitute Jew—and not of the Jew only—where he saw misery, he remembered only that its victim was man, he inquired not “ what manner of man.” His was not the charity that writes its name on the public record, and must have a guinea’s worth of gratitude and reputation for a subscription to that amount. If the predominance of good actions over evil ones may be permitted to strike a balance in favour of the mixed nature of humanity, Mezrack, though he worshipped according to no prescribed form, and subscribed

to few of the common dicta of society, might be counted among the righteous.

Sheltered under an unassuming garb, he often paced along populous streets ; and few might guess that the decayed man that so meekly gave way to them had just locked the strong box of immense treasure—just closed the ancient tome of abstruse lore. The tenant of the proud equipage rolled by, the conscious beauty passed, the man of note appeared, but none of these attracted the dark and deeply-seated eye of Mezrack ; it sought and found him that all these regard not, though they know not when their pomp may be shivered, and themselves—ashes ! The wretch set apart, like a leper, by his kind ; the wretch, crouching in the proud porch, dreading to be driven from even such precarious shelter by the rude lackey of luxury, or the police, that will dog him that offends by squalid misery, but deviates to avoid one that offends by reckless wantonness,—to that abused, abandoned, de-

spised victim of the bad arrangements of social policy, Mezrack would part with his cloak—would draw the arm of the scarce-believing beggar through his own, and lead him to unlooked-for shelter and wholesome food. Before the bewildered being was awakened from the paralysis with which poverty had stricken him, his benefactor had vanished, like a vision; his agents performed what more his benevolence purposed, and the rescued wretch was finally redeemed. Many were thus established in a small way of traffic, and given the means of exercising industry; among these Mezrack often came, without their being conscious that they stood in the presence of their preserver. Many also fell away from the better path he opened to them, and made new acquaintance with crime and wretchedness. Over these Mezrack mourned, as over the better judging he rejoiced; and though the former outnumbered the latter, it changed not his object—it chilled not his

charity. "Poor wretch!" he cried, as he viewed the malefactor, "weak didst thou come from the hands of nature, yet worse from the hands of education! And what is the world into which thou art thrown? does it boast a policy or a people to preserve thee? Let it answer—it knows itself. The Pharaohs ask of thee much, but afford thee means to do little—nay, they demand bricks, while they deny thee straw to make them."

Marmion departed from the Jew's house that night with money; but he left behind him some of the secrets of his heart that it had been wiser to have withheld. He had not drank so as to produce intoxication; it was rarely he so far degraded himself; but he had taken enough to weaken his habitually feeble resolution, and shake even such discretion as he could boast: with his brain heated, and his heart unlocked, the secret of his passion for Esther had escaped. Never did any of the children of Israel gather

the heaven-shed manna with the eagerness that, on the first hint, Mezrack gathered all the information about Esther that Marmion would yield. Lest wine might not have sufficient effect on his head, money was put into his hand. An intimate knowledge of human nature guided the Jew; he could assay the moral ore before him to some purpose. Money, to a man like Marmion, was more intoxicating than wine: though he threw about coin like counters, its very touch had a talismanic power—it took away the weights that pressed his heart, and the buoyant fountains leaped forth, as if to ask what power had made them free; and then, as a channel was made for their currents, they ran on, enriching others and draining themselves.

That night Mezrack was in London, or rather the next day ere dawn. He presented himself at the house of the Baron, and there, venerated and well known, the wonderful old man was admitted. Esther was just returned from a



bridal festival, and, when Mezrack was introduced to her dressing-room, stood in all the splendour of dress proper to such an occasion. She advanced to him with the warm welcome, the affectionate delight, which so few won from her, but which those that did won so entirely. Leading the old man to the upper end of the room, she made him take his place on a sumptuous couch, while she seated herself on a cushion close at his feet, and taking his withered hand, she pressed it in her own, white and warm, and then to the rich lip on which a smile of reverence was seated.

Her hair, her bosom, her arms were wreathed with the richest gems; and her majestic beauty was adorned by draperies of the costliest fabric and most graceful fashion. She was glowing with animation, yet touched with a melting tenderness as beautiful as it was rare with her. Darkness presents no deeper contrast to light, than the old man that looked down on her pre-

sented to Esther. Small, shrunk, and dark, with a garb of almost primitive simplicity, he might have personated a pilgrim worn by age and vowed to poverty, as she might an eastern queen.

"I have just come from the bridal of Rachel Raschiel," she cried. "I wound, as *my* gift, that string of orient pearls you lately gave me, in her dark hair."

"It is not binding the brow with costly bands that maketh blessings for the bride," said Mezrack.

"I know that, my father," said Esther; "and I have a fear that Rachel is alone rich in all that is not riches in itself, but only according to the arbitrary estimation in which it is held."

"What doth Esther account real riches?" he asked, looking on her fair and uplifted face with secret delight and deep scrutiny.

"True hearts that never fade in faith, or

fall away in trial—love that makes the absent present, and the divided one—life among those we honour, and memory among them when we die.” And again the aged hand was pressed to her fresh lip ; again her soul-lighted eyes settled on her grandfather’s face.

“ And think you,” he cried, “ such riches may be found in this city of sepulchres ?”

“ I had not feared such questions from you,” she answered. “ *I* have some of the wealth of which we talk ; and that which we know of ourselves, we can believe of others. There are, my father, many stars in the firmament.”

“ True ; but they differ in magnitude. And thou comparest that which is not to be compared—the incorruptible and the corruptible—the stars of heaven and the sons of men.”

“ The one as the other are the work of the same hand,” said Esther. “ Shall I tell you an opinion of mine ?” she added, after a pause.

“ A bright form never bore a dark spirit.”

Mezrack shook his head, and a slight smile curled his lip.

“What doth the shining and beautifully-speckled skin of the snake cover?” he asked.

“Is it not venom?”

“Venom to us,” replied Esther, “but not to its own kind.”

“Therein, then, doth man differ from all animals; it is *he* and vermin that alone prey on their own species,” said Mezrack, with bitterness. “Let it suffice thee that *thy* fair form holdeth a yet fairer spirit—and see that it be not defiled.”

Esther’s eyes sunk under the piercing look of Mezrack. She believed he alluded to her prospective change of faith, but she also thought of the marriage she purposed, and the love to which she had devoted herself, and which would effectually cast her out from her people.

“ ‘The kings of the earth, and all the inha-

bitants of the world, would not have believed that the adversary and the enemy should have entered into the gates of Jerusalem.' ”

These words Mezrack uttered with impassioned earnestness, as he cast up his hands and eyes. The adversary and enemy to whom he alluded was Marmion Beaucaire : Esther held it to be Christianity, and was silent.

“ ‘ Wherefore,’ ” continued the old man, rising, and still speaking from the sacred volume, “ ‘ wherefore dost thou forget us for ever, and forsake us so long time ?’ ”

He walked down the room, while Esther, resting her elbow on her knee, veiled her face with her hand. She regarded Mezrack with deep veneration and fond affection ; she knew his wisdom, his worth ; from her infancy he had treated her with the tenderest paternal love ; and she could not, without emotion, perceive him troubled, and believe herself the cause.

“ ‘ How,’ ” exclaimed Mezrack, as he re-

turned up the room,—“ ‘ How hath the Lord covered the daughter of Zion with a cloud in his anger, and cast down from heaven unto earth the beauty of Israel !’ ”

He resumed his seat, and laid his hand on the head of Esther.

“ Daughter of Zion !” he cried, “ dost thou remember that thou art betrothed ?”

“ I have not forgotten it,” she answered. “ I purpose gaining the divorcement to which dislike entitles us. It was an engagement made *for me* ; it shall be annulled *by me*.”

“ That thou may’st in turn receive a bill of divorcement from the gentile, and join the abused and disbanded daughters that he injures, and then rejects ?”

“ What means my father ?” exclaimed Esther, — starting as if a scorpion had stung her.

“ ‘ Fear and a snare is come upon us ; desolation and destruction.’ ‘ Mine eyes runneth down with rivers of water for the

destruction of the daughter of my people,' ” exclaimed Mezrack, still adopting the language of Scripture.

“ Hide not your mind from me,” said Esther.

“ Tell me—are you in anger ?”

“ No ; but in sorrow, bitter as the waters of Marah,” he replied. “ Esther, why hast thou done this ? Why hast thou given thy heart unto a stranger—thy promise to a gentile ?”

“ How know you that ?” she exclaimed.

“ Who has betrayed me ?”

“ They that betray themselves never lack betrayers,” replied her grandsire. “ But I will own thou hast been betrayed through weakness, not through wickedness. ‘ Behold, thou trustest upon the staff of this bruised reed, on which if a man lean, it shall go into his hand and pierce it.’ I speak not of him of whom Hezekiah spoke—I speak of——”

“ Marmion Beaucaire,” she added, filling up the pause that Mezrack made. “ He has

been beguiled to his own injury and mine," she exclaimed with that readiness with which we mitigate the error of one beloved. "His nature is generous; when the ripe grape is pressed, it will yield its wine. His breast has been rifled; he never cast forth its treasure in contempt, or in defiance, of my injunction."

"I will not wrong him so far as to deny it," said Mezrack, generously. "Much trouble, some wine, and a little tempting, which fear and love regarding thee made me administer, opened for me the sanctuary of his breast. O is that breast worthy of the heart thou hast given him to shrine in it?"

"How would his proud spirit answer in fire to such suspicion!" she exclaimed, full of the sense of injury in Marmion's behalf. "And to any other than you, my father, how would mine!"

"Extreme cleaveth to thy sex as a garment to thy body," said Mezrack. "Hear me warn



thee against this covenant. What shall give thee release?"

"Death or deceit," she replied.

"What if the latter?" asked Mezrack.

"O!" she exclaimed, covering her face with her hands, "what a hideous image have you conjured up!" After a pause she rose; and, standing beside the old man as she might have stood to plead her cause before the judges of the land, she exclaimed—

"I have been taught to know that I am peerless among women; that I tower above them in comeliness as in stature. I know I have wealth that might satisfy avarice, and could command a station that might content ambition: beyond all these I place his love—for *that* I resign to him mine, myself, my faith, my fortune. I have placed my all upon that stake—a desperate gambler you will say——"

Mezrack sighed and shook his head, as the wisdom of experience rose against the poetry of passion.

“ Let him be true of faith,” she continued ;  
“ and, though destruction follow, I forsake him  
him not. Let me prove him false, (and Heaven  
pardon thee putting this mad thought into my  
mind !) I will make him such as he shall not  
play false again. Falsehood has ever a frail  
life and a foul end—truth is immortal. I now  
kneel a worshipper at the shrine of truth ; but I  
can rise and sacrifice in the temple of false-  
hood.”

The colour faded from her face, and she stood  
pale as statuary marble. “ See,” she cried,  
after a momentary pause, “ if it is thus the bare  
imagination moves me, what would the dark  
reality effect ? But this is very folly,” she  
added, calming herself, and sinking again on  
the cushion. “ I am grieved that I have yielded  
to this transport. Speak to me, my father ;  
forgive my nature that hath too much fire, and  
I will school it into submission, at least to *you*.  
Counsel me, and as far as I can I will follow

your counsel. What is it moves you thus, my father—my honoured father?" and she took his hand caressingly in hers, and leaned her head against his arm. "Tell me what thus moves you."

"The memory of the past and the fear of the future," he replied.

"You are wise," she exclaimed; "you know that both to look back and to look forward is equally vain, (for so I have heard you say;) it does but embitter the present moment, which yet we may make happy. I should have thought to offer you refreshment ere this," she added, ringing the bell; "you are in need of it."

"It is not easy to them that have suffered much to forget," said the Jew; "nor for them that love much to be without fear."

In a few minutes wine and refreshment were brought in, and Esther ministered to the old man, endeavouring to cheer his spirits, and

reconcile him to the event he had discovered, and its attendant consequences. The wine he took threw some little colour into his sallow cheek, and his sunken eye shot forth piercing rays of more than usual lustre; but Esther soon perceived that internal agitation had more to do with his excitement than anything of which he had partaken.

“Esther,” he cried, after a silence of some duration, “I am a man that hath seen good and evil fortune. I am rich, and I was poor—miserably poor. I have not departed from the wisdom I learned in those days when I hungered, and had no bread; when I thirsted, and had no drink; when I was weary, and had not where to lay me down to rest. These are the memories that make me mindful of the poor man. I feel for his affliction, for I have proved sorrow: I forgive his transgressions, for I have known trial—the trial of temptation—when nature suffers from the pangs of famine,

and in the presence of the feast of wantonness. When nature, outraged nature, speaks in cries, and those cries are stifled—not with bread—no !” he repeated, rising, as if agitation did not permit him to sit still ; “ no, not with bread—but with blows !” And he clasped his withered hands, and wrung them, as if the recollection of past suffering was equivalent to present agony.

“ Yes,” he resumed, with an energy that belonged not to his years, “ not with blows only, but with the branding iron ! Look,” he cried, stripping up his sleeve, and showing his bare arm ; “ there, there, felon is written in those seared and savage scars—*felon for food !*”

Esther caught the extended hand, and sinking on her knee, burst into a flood of tears. The old man dropped on his knees beside her, and folded her to his breast.

“ Balm, balm, this is balm !” he cried. “ If there be a register yet against me, these tears

will blot out my offences. They are to me as the fountain of the desert—as the accepted sacrifice.”

Mezrack rose and raised Esther. How beautiful is the sorrow of the beautiful! Mezrack gazed upon her as she stood in her stately but unaffected mournfulness, and exclaimed, in a voice of triumph, as the past rose in strong contrast to his memory, “Behold the daughter of the despised Jew—in all the land no woman is found so fair!” And walking back to the couch, he drew Esther to his side.

“Esther,” he resumed, “your father is my only son—but I had another child. The world would say she was less beautiful than thou art; but of her better beauty what might the world know? I knew it, Esther; she acknowledged when all else denied me: when they branded me as a felon, *she* blessed me as her father! She was with me often when the morning broke upon us without bread, and when the night

closed upon us without shelter. But never came there murmur from her lip ; still, still she cheered me on—bade me offer up the sacrifice of an humble spirit and a perfect faith. Alas ! the sacrifice I offered was herself, and the perfect faith was placed in a false Christian—he robbed me of my child. Twenty long years have passed away, but have worn out none of the traces then burned in agony on my bereaved heart. And now shall a Christian again take my only daughter ? O ! Esther, commune with thy soul. Remember that I lift my voice against him.”

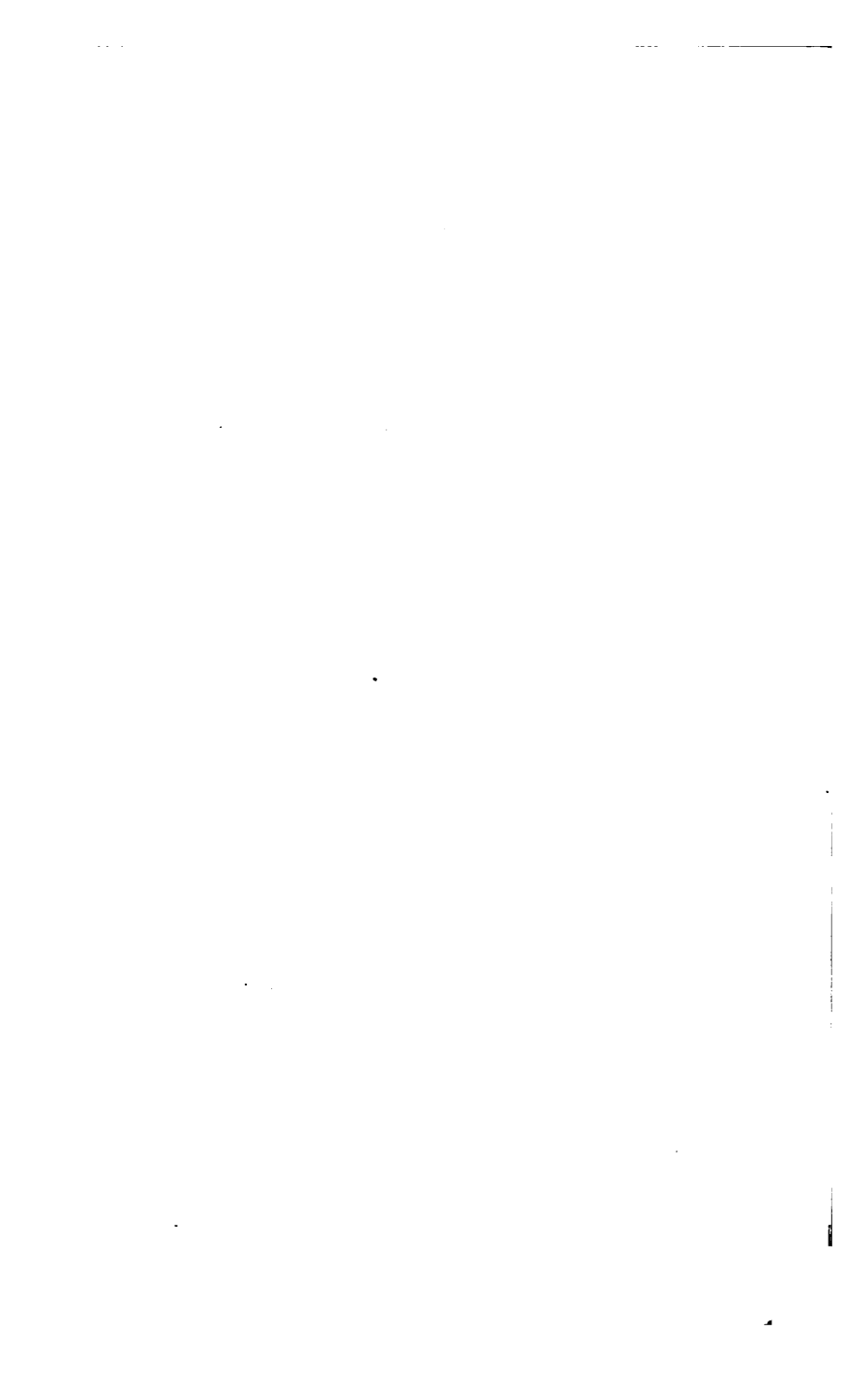
Mezrack did not retire to rest till the sun was abroad ; Esther retired not at all. She changed her splendid for a simple dress ; but no other change did the past hours effect. She still venerated her grandfather ; perhaps loved him more deeply for the sorrow he had known. But he had not shaken one iota of her passion for Marmion. All that had been urged against

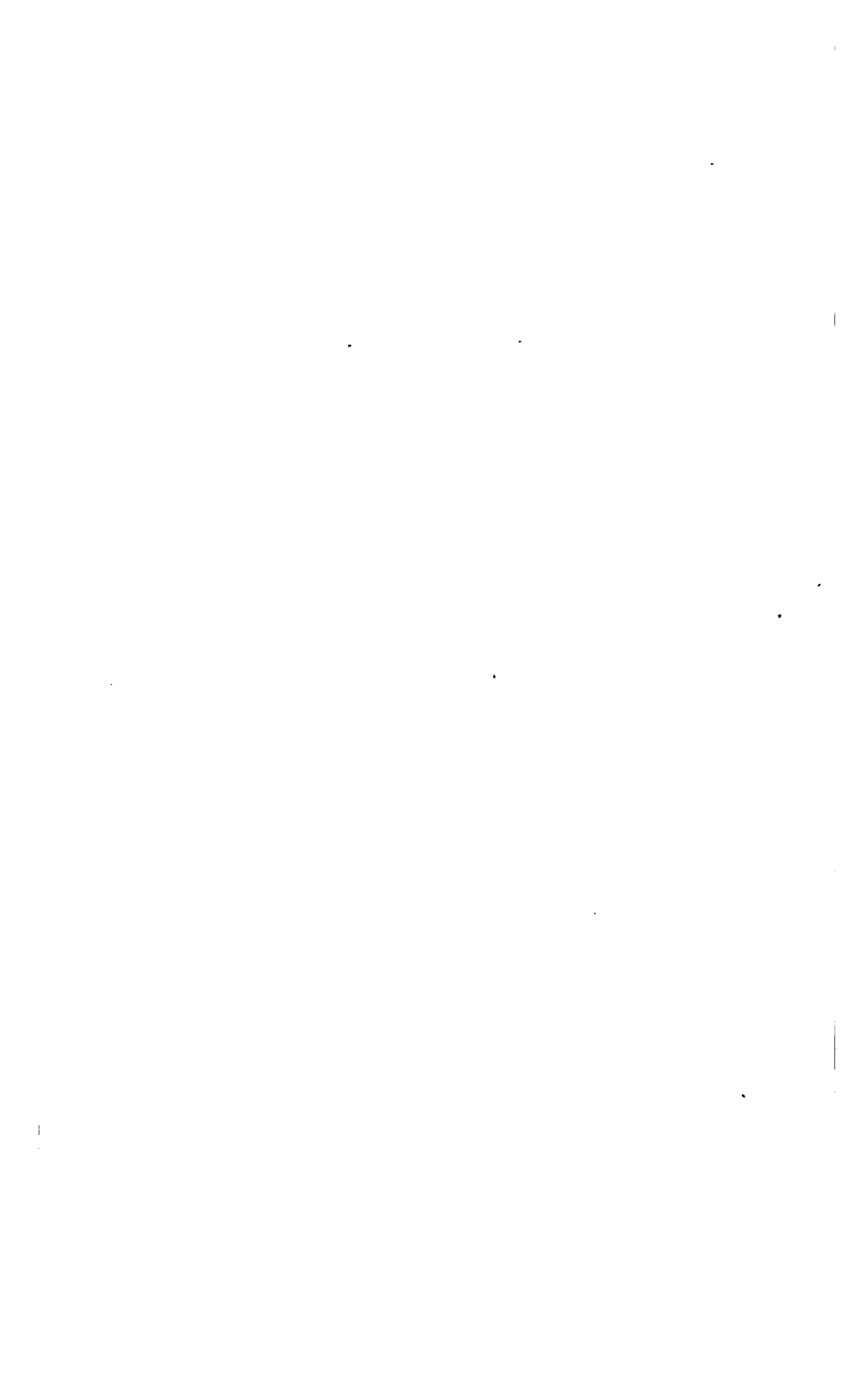
*him* was placed to the account of religious prejudice, and the deep memory of individual injury ; and thus Mezrack only more effectually riveted the bands he tried to break.

END OF VOLUME I.



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# CHARACTER;

OR,

## JEW AND GENTILE:

A Tale.

BY

Mrs. LEMAN GRIMSTONE,

AUTHOR OF "WOMAN'S LOVE," &c. &c.

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IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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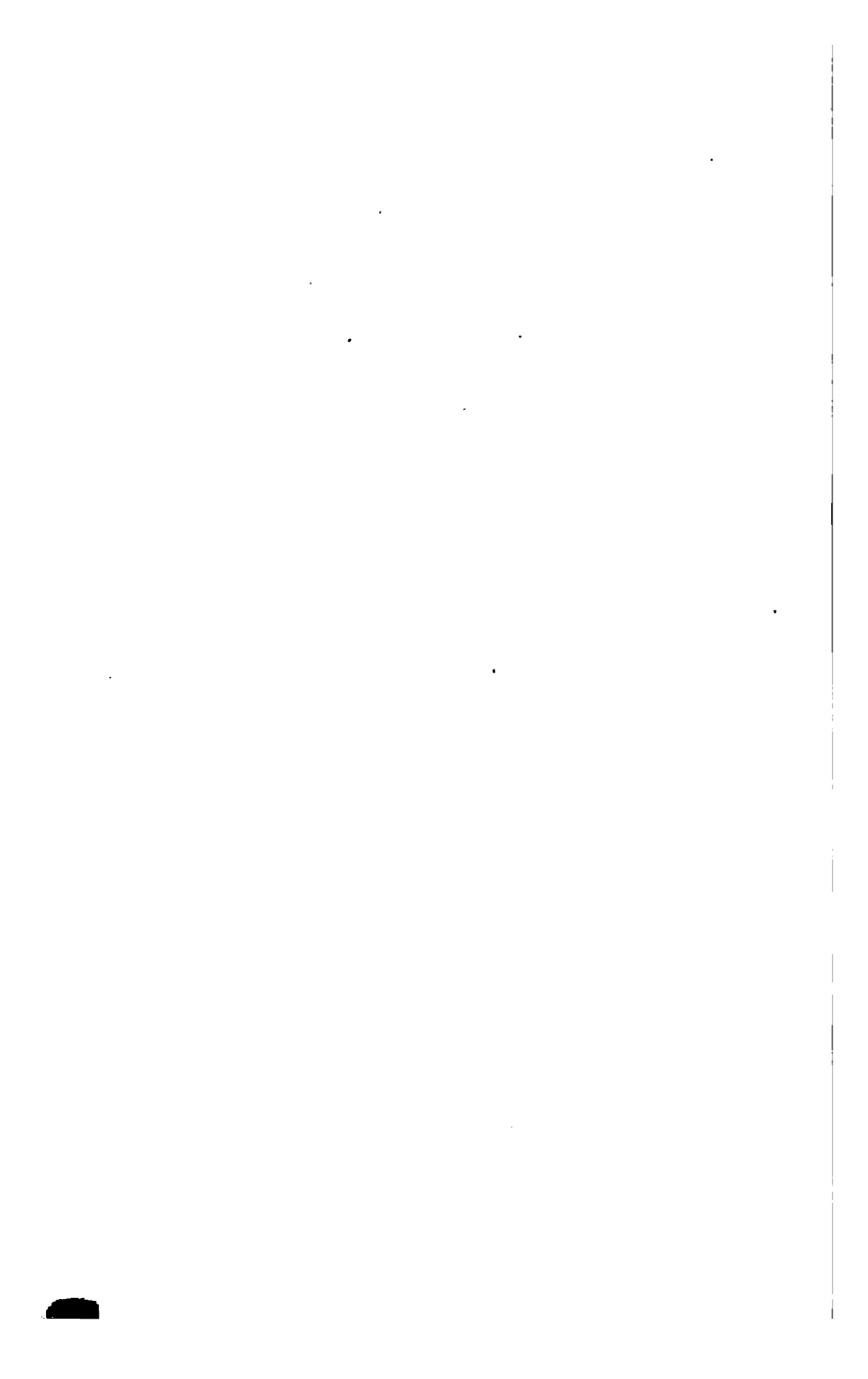
CHARLES FOX, 67, PATERNOSTER-ROW.

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MDCCCXXXIII.

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share of spirits ; she could not resist the influence of the sympathy, affection, and intelligence by which she was surrounded. Mrs. Trevor never gazed on her, as she glanced amid the group of her children, without wishing Magdalene her own by a dearer tie than friendship and gratitude. Insensibly this wish grew into a hope, as she read the silent language of Arthur's eyes, perceived how involuntarily his heart cleaved to the fair, fond, infantile girl, who, unsuspecting of her power, approached him with the confidence of a sister.

There was a wild, though delicate, vivacity about Magdalene, when her spirits revived, that contrasted strangely with the deep melancholy to which she was prone. Often at morning her bird-like voice was heard warbling snatches of song, and breathing bright laughter, while her fleet foot and flexile form seemed insensible to the power of rest ;--then a change would come upon her spirit, her glad eyes were shadowed into sadness by the drooping lashes ;

the dimpled cheek grew pale, and the buoyant step subsided into languor. Beautiful in her melancholy as her mirth, Mrs. Trevor noted her in either mood with pleasure and with pain—pain because she feared this variability was indicative of that malady which so often falls, like a blight, upon the fairest.

Mrs. Trevor had not been a month at Bees-home, when Mr. Coverley and Malfort arrived at Vex'em Park. The latter now called himself Professor,—a dignity to which, as well as to many others, he said, various foreign universities gave him a title. The partiality of Mr. Coverley paved the way for Malfort. The former held that universal amulet, the power of money; and those that hoped to benefit by it, and those that did not, alike bowed before it. His property, be it remembered, was acquired—hence cumbered by no entails, or any of those restrictions that attach to hereditary possessions, and shackle or thwart the views of the holder. Mr. Coverley could at any mo-

ment alter his will, if it should be his will to alter it; the consciousness of this hung, like the sword of Damocles, over every member of his family, and probably assisted not a little in making his rule absolute.

Malfort met the stately politeness of Sir Ralph Beaucaire with such profound respect, that the latter instantly quickened into a more condescending courtesy, intuitively feeling that he had no occasion to stand guard over his dignity with one who so implicitly allowed it. Lady Beaucaire was suffering under real or fancied indisposition, but a message from Mr. Coverley gained him and the Professor admission to her dressing-room. They found her reposing on a couch, in the numerous cushions of which she seemed to taste the very satiety of sloth. Their presence proved some excitement, and she received them gracefully. Though no longer young, she was still beautiful, and her undress was becoming. The intercourse of polished life had given her a

species of intellectual cultivation ; and though her stock of ideas was still small, she knew how to make the most of it.

Lady Beaucaire was possessed of art, but she was opposed to one that was a far greater adept, because of infinitely more penetration and subtlety. Malfort just gave such evidence of admiration as should act as a magnet on her vanity, and stimulate her to an active exhibition of character. He was not disappointed ; and the stream was so shallow, that he easily saw to the bottom. Suffering her ladyship and Mr. Coverley to converse, Malfort did little more than advance hints or suggest ideas : thus he kept up, but added nothing to the current of discourse ; pleased *them*, and profited *himself*, by playing listener ; detected some of the springs of *their* minds, and kept all *his own* concealed. A skilful angler, he furnished the bait best suited to the tenants of the stream over which he mused ; and when

the interview ended, he left Mr. Coverley confirmed, and Lady Beaucaire prepossessed, in his favour.

She sank into reverie ; but she did not ask herself, as all should do, when they have perused a page of a book or a human being—What have I learned? Had she done so, perhaps the answer would have been—Nothing, or something so vague as to amount to little more. She felt, without any inquiry, that she was pleased ; she unsuspectingly referred this effect to the Professor, unconscious that he was only the agent that had called into activity a principle that always gave her pleasure, and pleases everybody—self-satisfaction.

The next morning, though Lady Beaucaire had thought much of Malfort, she made no mention of him to her husband ; while Sir Ralph, who had thought of him not at all, spoke of him a good deal. Perverse and disingenuous as civilized humanity generally is,

very rarely do external carriage or avowed sentiments afford any criterion of the feelings and opinions.

Once at Vex'em Park, Malfort advanced silently and certainly. To Mr. Coverley he was obsequious and useful; quick to suggest measures, and prompt in having them executed: he took care, while he kept the mind of his principal amused and employed, never to present the stumbling-block of opposition. To Sir Ralph, Malfort was attentive; apparently full of a kind of involuntary anxiety to hear his opinions, and gain information regarding the policy and commerce of England. Sir Ralph, like all that are eloquent, and many that are not, liked to hear himself talk; but his pleasure in speaking was proportioned to the degree of appreciation in which he was held, and his own partiality for the topic he entertained. Weakness, of some kind or other, alloys the finest powers. Sir Ralph formed a high opinion of Malfort, principally because he believed

Malfort held him in high estimation. We receive impressions, never examine them.

But Malfort's masterpiece was the influence he gained, with little flattery and no eloquence, over Lady Beaucaire, a vain, superficial woman. Nature had been bountiful to Malfort in the machinery of his mind, giving it complicated and patient power of action ; but she had given him none of those advantages that secure rapid pre-eminence ; he had no poetry, no eloquence, no grace, no fire : he was a clear acute calculator, with much presence of mind, and great penetration. He knew human nature, and the worst part of it best ; he knew its weakness and gullibility—he brought his strength to bear on the former, and established his pretensions on the latter.

Marmion made some brief visits to the Park, and shared the common infatuation regarding Malfort—perhaps inoculated by the general prepossession, for prevailing opinions are as infectious as prevailing diseases. The man

that everybody likes, if without striking individual merits (and Malfort had none, either of person, talent, or accomplishment), must have some principle of universal application. What was Malfort's?—the art of discovering the secret springs of self-love in every breast making a profession of faith in human probity, and showing an apparent desire to gain nothing but sympathy and confidence. To examine this mental machinery, and discover its fitness for the purpose to which it was applied, we will look into the separate parts, and begin with the last mentioned.

Malfort was adroit at extracting and bold at seizing confidence; and confidence once gained, he had gained a great deal. If he then lost love, he had a hold on fear; interest will operate in the place of esteem; nay, often, to preserve self-respect and self-approbation, we strive against conviction, and forbear to doubt where it would be fatal to find deceit. Malfort's pretended



faith in human probity inferred the perfectness of his own, and the extensive credit for excellence he must necessarily give his immediate friends. Humanity is easily flattered into *seeming*, however hard it may be to lead it into *being good*. Imputed praise has produced fine actions, in order that the credit unexpectedly gained may not be unprofitably lost. Malfort made the evidence of goodness to consist in giving *him* power, privilege, and advantage :—is there any doubt that he was a gainer by the creed he professed? Malfort's skill in detecting the spring of self-love, admitted him to power over the whole moral machine ; because it is the master-wheel that moves all others, and to which all others are subordinate. Against self-love he never offended till he had secured confidence, and stimulated the ambition of high character ; then, like the usurper, that, as soon as he has gained the throne, resigns the arts by which it was won, Malfort would relax the

discipline in which he had held himself, and seek an indemnifying sport in tormenting the self-love he had once flattered.

When the Professor discovered that Mrs. Trevor was established at Beeshome, he became desirous of gaining two points. These were to secure free admission for himself to her house, and distance and dislike between her and Lady Beaucaire. He wished as much as possible to prevent that intercommunion which might lead Mrs. Trevor to develop any of the opinions which penetration and intuitive apprehension had led her to form regarding him. Nothing could be so easy as to bias Lady Beaucaire to the prejudice of Mrs. Trevor. It was only reviving old impressions, which subsequent years had abated, not obliterated. The Exmores had had their own motives in separating these ladies—they had no desire that their sister should have the benefit of the acute mind of Agnes, or imbibe any of her just principles. Thus they had endeavoured to plant envy and jealousy

between them ; and though these passions had borne little fruit, they had struck deep root in the breast of Lady Beaucaire. Malfort, unconscious that the ground was already prepared, and habitually cautious to produce effects without exhibiting causes, went to work, but not in the clumsy way of ordinary malice or vulgar deceit. Malfort never spoke against any one ; he only provoked, and that unperceived, the work of defamation ; then he came forward, as if eager to extenuate or repair. This answered a double purpose : it placed his goodness and the evil he affected to shelter in strong contrast, making the one seem brighter and the other blacker than if each stood alone ; and that turpitude appeared dark indeed which even his philanthropic ingenuity could not defend. Unwittingly, too, he gained another advantage—Lady Beaucaire still dreaded the rivalry of Agnes, and was pleased to find she had made no favourable impression on Malfort ; for her ladyship had learned to know that the negative

declaration of wanting sympathy, which was the strongest expression of aversion the Professor ever allowed himself to use, meant what was equivalent to the more common expressions of dislike, when in other people antipathy is engendered.

Malfort's other view on Beeshome was equally in character. This man, wily as a serpent, looked with an eye of passion on the innocent Magdalene. The purity of her nature and the perfection of her beauty had at first awed him, but success increased his boldness and stimulated his bad ambition. Perhaps art or nature affords no parallel antithesis to that presented by Magdalene and the Professor. The celestial and the satyr are not so distinct. *He*, hackneyed in the gross experience of the world—*she* a child of the wild savannah, who, like the babe that never knew food but from the milky fountains of a mother's breast, possessed no knowledge that had not been prepared for her by her admirable parent's mind.

The arts that duped the suspicious and experienced adult could not fail of making their way among the circle at Deeshome. Malfort gained common courtesy from Mrs. Trevor, but a cordial welcome from her children, and, through their means, he at last succeeded in softening her. He kept them amused and employed, and showed much skill in attaching them by means of exciting pleasurable interests, and making himself necessary and useful. The local knowledge he had gained of the place and people was wonderful; therefore he was an excellent guide in expeditions for instruction or amusement. Magdalene was particularly anxious to visit every spot where her mother had ever trod—to see the cottages and speak to the people her presence had once blest. Malfort learned this, and was soon informed of all that the vicinity could yield to his inquiry, and was enabled to speak of Mrs. Melburn as if he had known her for years, instead of having merely seen her on a few occasions during their dis-

astrous voyage. Thus he frequently secured Magdalene as his companion in the walks and excursions the young people indulged. She would lean confidently on the arm of the bold designer, while Arthur, with the timidity of real love, allowed himself to be distanced. If Malfort ever voluntarily resigned Magdalene, it was in favour of Hagar, to whom, as soon as she was able to appear abroad, he devoted an attention that won the warmest gratitude from Magdalene, and even moved Mrs. Trevor to admiration; for to those that knew not her moral worth, Hagar had now little to recommend her: she was habitually silent, reserved, and melancholy, seeming rather to acquiesce in living than to enjoy life. Malfort's attention to her took the character of a duty, and perhaps he was not insensible to a virtuous pleasure as well as a sinister advantage.

A pic-nic party, including a large number of persons, had been some time projected and was at length realized. The most beautiful scene

on the banks of the Orwell was selected ; and early in the day, boats, carriages, and horses bore the numerous assembly to the place of rendezvous. Tents were pitched from which gay pennons streamed, and bands of musicians made the woods vocal.

Lady Beaucaire found it impossible to avoid joining this general festival, but she owed to her *cavalier servente* that she did so reluctantly. He appeared touched by much the same feeling, though he did not acknowledge it. The party was one in which ease and familiarity are prominent features, yet Malfort felt all the torture of restraint. He saw Magdalene, who was delighted with the scene, bounding like a fawn from group to group ; at one moment the companion of the aged, at the next dancing with a circle of the young. He did not approach her. Besides the policy, in a particular instance, of appearing indifferent to Magdalene, he was embarrassed by the presence of many, each of whom believed herself an object of his exclusive

preference; for he did not confine the exercise of his social policy to the Park, but extended it, from high to low, all around wherever he could gain admission. In this manner, as he was adroit in discovering talent and in stimulating its exercise, he opened an extensive field, of which he seized the produce; and by keeping the producers apart, used their efforts as he deemed most expedient; making the work of one reward the labour of another, while the aggregate of gratitude and obligation accrued to himself.

When dinner was prepared, many preferred forming small parties under the shade of trees, to joining the better-ordered tables beneath the tents. Amid one of these rustic groups Magdalene sat, with Hubert Trevor on one side of her, and Sir Ralph Beaucaire on the other. The latter had been much in town, and had seen little of Magdalene; but he regarded her with an interest of which none perhaps but Agnes knew the strength. His feelings had



retired deeper and deeper into his breast, and an artificial manner still further sheltered them from discovery. But on this day the bland influence of summer, the absence of forms of fashion and splendour, seemed to restore to him something of his former self. He conversed much with Magdalene ; drew from her a history of her voyage and the wreck, and she became eloquent, for her recollections and feelings were vivid.

“ Here,” she exclaimed, as she concluded, “ here is my preserver !” and she laid her hand on Hubert’s arm, with eyes swimming in tears and beaming with gratitude. A deep sigh made her look up ; and standing immediately opposite to her, and leaning against a tree, she beheld Arthur. His eyes were fixed upon her face ; he had been listening to her narrative ; had felt every beauty of her expression—every inflection of her voice.

Arthur loved Magdalene to that excess that ever invites fear and doubt. He yearned to tell

his love ; but what language might express it ? And what should he not risk in the avowal ! He felt the charm of her beauty, her confidence, her affection, which, in common with all his family, he enjoyed : in seeking more he might sacrifice all ; for if she could not return his love, she would retreat from his presence. O ! that she had retreated originally ! He was metaphysician enough to know the distinctive character of the affection she gave, and the love he desired. Love he knew needs no prompting ; he knew it from his own experience. The very serviceable substitute that joins together the pairs of the working-day world, and often realizes for them a very reasonable share of happiness—that sentiment that grows out of the why and because of calculation and expediency, suited not his romantic mind—it was not the sentiment he felt, and panted to inspire.

Love magnifies the merit of its object, till the fear of wanting desert grows upon the lover. This again made Arthur hesitate to avow his

passion, while it animated him to attain the utmost excellence he could reach.

“ I will deserve her though I have her not,—  
There’s something still in *that*,”

he often exclaimed as he toiled at study, and laid the foundation of the pre-eminence which would win her praise, if not her love.

The moment Magdalene had averted her eyes from him, which, kind and unconscious, seemed to ask him why he sighed, he turned suddenly away, and hurrying deeper into the wood, flung himself upon the ground. With his elbow resting on the sward, and his cheek on his hand, he fixed his eyes on vacancy. A hectic glow burned on his cheek, and from beneath his knitted brow his eyes shot fire. He had not lain long, when he felt a hand laid lightly on his shoulder. Turning his head, in no kindly mood, to learn who was intruding on his solitude, he met the young face of Magdalene bending close to his. She started at the expression of severity so unusual to Arthur’s

aspect: it changed instantly; and instead of foregoing her hold of his shoulder, she laid her other hand on his arm as she said,

“You are ill, Arthur?”

Her face had lost its brilliant vivacity, and in its place wore a kind concern. He did not answer her; he could not bear to break the spell she breathed upon him.

“Speak to me, Arthur,” she added, after a pause, and taking his burning hand. “You must go home. I will call your mother—no; it may alarm her—your father and Fanny, and we will go home with you.”

Arthur kept her hand, and prevented her leaving him. “No, no, I am not ill,” he exclaimed. “But if I were, then for me you would forsake this scene, that pleases you so much, and be content to sit and watch by my sick bed?”

“Content, dear Arthur! delighted, if so I brought you comfort and repose. Are you not the son of my mother’s friend and mine? Are

you not the brother of Hubert, to whom I owe my life?"

"Ay, ay," he petulantly exclaimed, "for their sakes you would look with pity,—pay some attention to the poor wretch. Go, Magdalene, go back to them."

"You are rude, Arthur!" she exclaimed, hurt at his manner, even more than his words; for Magdalene, affectionate as she was, had that spirit that answers with some show of fire when offended. "But I am sure you are ill," she added, "and I will not chide a sick boy."

"*Boy!*" he repeated. Perhaps in the whole vocabulary of language there is no word (when applied to himself) so offensive to the aspirant for the dignity of manhood. While age looks back wistfully on youth, and would buy back its unearned glories with all that age has accumulated, youth pants on impatient for the wreath that withers while 'tis winning.

"*Boy!*" echoed Arthur. "I did not expect to meet contempt from Magdalene!" and he

raised his eyes, burning with so strange an expression, that she retreated from him far as his hold would allow. Leaping on his feet, he grasped with his disengaged hand a branch of the tree beneath which he had lain: he raised his slender form to its utmost height, and his colour deepened as he exclaimed,

“There is the strength of manhood in these sinews—its fire in my soul, and you call me boy!—What do you call Hubert?”

“Arthur, you have taken a fever, or too much wine,” said Magdalene, struggling to release her hand. “I wish Hubert was here now to deliver me again; my situation is less perilous, but more painful.”

Arthur’s hand unclosed, and she stood free; but of the liberty of which she had been so desirous, she did not avail herself. The expressive face of Arthur needed not the language so reluctant to come to his aid; its changing expression touched, but it perplexed her.

"Forgive me," he cried, "I have offended you—I forgot myself; forgive me!"

"You are a riddle to me, Arthur," she replied, affected by the emotion betrayed by his voice. "But it is I have been hasty—misapprehended you; I ought perhaps to ask forgiveness, and I do—I would not hurt you for the world!"

Magdalene was an energetic speaker; her voice was sweet and full of inflections. It is easy in such a voice to fancy love. Arthur fancied so; and he might have revealed the secret of his soul under the idea; but they were interrupted by a sound like the tread of a led horse; and turning in the direction whence it came, they saw Marmion approaching, with the bridle of Bruce hanging over his arm. He bowed, smiled, and shook hands with Arthur, who was under the necessity of presenting Marmion, as yet a stranger, to Magdalene.

Beaucaire raised the riding-cap he wore, and

she coloured deeply as she met his graceful salutation. Her self-possession suddenly took flight; and, though desirous to return to the company, she stood motionless. There was a something about Marmion that seemed to overpower her; and she was relieved when Arthur gave her his arm, and they walked on. Marmion was immediately on the other side of her, and offered her another arm, which, perhaps more to her own satisfaction than Arthur's, she took.

On reaching the company, Marmion committed his horse to a servant, engaged Magdalene as his partner in the dance about to commence, and then went in quest of Lady Beaucaire, to pay his respects to her. The hope that, not long before, had glanced upon the heart of young Trevor, died away, as, with a pang of apprehensive jealousy, his eye pursued the form of Beaucaire, as he passed along, greeting those he knew, and at length vanished within the tent in which his mother sat.



When Arthur looked round for Magdalene, he perceived her standing in the midst of his sisters, and talking to Hubert. Hubert had already to-day alarmed his brother's fears. He was, it is true, more than three years younger than Magdalene; but in a short time how immaterial would be that difference! and already Hubert towered in height superior to his age, while his dark complexion and marked countenance banished the impression that he was a mere boy.

Arthur walked on to join the group, and a strange sensation sickened his heart as Magdalene sprung forward with frank delight, before all the rest, to meet him. He saw that she was full of genial affection, but was an utter stranger to love; and whoever might awaken her to the sentiment, he feared it would not be himself. Melancholy, therefore, was the smile with which he received her hand, which she laughingly proffered him in recollection of their little altercation. She was about to speak just as Marmion reappeared, and hurried her away.

The mind is sure to arrive at erroneous conclusions, if it dwells too long and too exclusively on one theme—never more so than when that theme is love. It is to be feared that the severe lessons of personal experience will alone ever be efficacious in such a case. It is possible that in all other of the trials of life, admonition, example, reflection, may be of some avail, and the well-taught and the well-guarded may escape, by foresight, forethought, and right reason, the snares and pitfalls that beset their path; but against love, as against death, there is no shield: they are the two great principles of nature that seem ever in action to preserve and to destroy; and the martyr to the one deserves more pity, and the victim to the other less, than it is the custom of mankind to bestow.

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## CHAPTER II.

THE discrimination that we attain when we are no longer engaged in the scenes in which it might be of use—how valuable would it be in the time of trial, when the heart is tempted ! Then less frequently should we reject the gem that lies in unostentatious worth waiting to be appreciated ; less frequently take in its place the factitious bauble that has no value in itself, and often disgraces the wearer.

Magdalene was struck by the form of Beaucaire, but she was more engaged by his eloquence : in that lay his superiority to Arthur. She knew not that Arthur's " not speaking spoke for him," and that the fluency of Marmion argued against him. There is no practice founded in such wisdom as the habit of tracing

effects to their causes. Could Magdalene have known the means by which Marmion had won the arts of flattery that he applied with so much grace and delicacy—on how many hearts he had whetted his wit—that his skill was like the skill of the soldier, won at the expense of wounds inflicted—and that the polished tongue is often a more fatal instrument than the polished sword—she would have recoiled instead of being taken captive, and owned that the libertine's grace, like the hero's glory, has no intrinsic value.

A brighter moon never beamed in the heavens, than lighted up the sylvan scene in which Magdalene and Marmion danced; to her all had the enchantment of novelty, and the charm of contrast. Young as she was, she had been acquainted with deep distress; and though its memory did not intrude amid the revels, it had left impressions that made her more sensible to enjoyment than one that had never known calamity. Again and again Marmion

was her partner, and none had ever danced to her with such grace; she saw him attract universal attention, gain universal admiration, and, new to the world, she imagined the tribute was paid to his superior worth, not to his prospective wealth. Unconscious, in a great degree, of her own claims, she felt she had been distinguished by preference rather than by merit, and she retreated from the notice into which Marmion drew her.

It was rarely that Sir Ralph felt pleased with his son; but he was infinitely pleased by the devotion he saw him pay to Magdalene. The idea of her enjoying her mother's forfeited inheritance, by means of a union with *his* son, soothed the sentiments of grief and regard in which Sir Ralph held the memory of his first love, and he resolved to promote a passion which promised to lead to so just an accomplishment.

When the assembly scattered, and the dispersing people parted on their several ways,

Lady Beaucaire, at the instigation of her husband, pressed Mrs. Trevor to honour the Park more frequently with her presence, and her daughters and Miss Melburn were severally named in the invitation: to this Sir Ralph added his more friendly entreaties, addressing himself more particularly to Agnes and Magdalene. The latter he caressed as his child; and she slept that night in the conviction that the world was all brightness, and the people in it all benevolence.

Formal and specific invitations compelled Mrs. Trevor to visit at the Park, to which she was somewhat disinclined; and when Sir Ralph communicated to her his designs in behalf of her protégée, which he did in strict confidence, she no longer hesitated to resign Magdalene more implicitly to her new friends, while she stifled the hopes she had suffered herself to indulge for Arthur.

He soon perceived that his worst fears were realized; Beaucaire was a perpetual visitor at

Beeshome, and Magdalene was frequently at the Park. When Arthur had conquered the first pangs of disappointed passion, he thought with sorrow of the election she had made. Had she been lost to him, to be bestowed on one worthy of her, he imagined he could have better borne his fate; but he knew too well the dissoluteness of Beaucaire's life, and the laxity of his principles. Should he, he asked himself, warn her? If he did, would he be believed? He could not be an unsuspected witness, and truth to her were treachery to Marmion. The ranklings of envy, the memory of past injury, would be deemed the stimulants of his conduct; the virulence of revenge and secret malice would be imputed to him.

Arthur's health suffered under the anguish of his mind; he felt the wreck he would become, and aroused himself in time. He resolved to travel, to visit foreign schools of science, and court a more grateful mistress than woman ever proved. While in the perpetual

presence of Magdalene he could not defy her influence, especially as her tenderness increased with the decline of his health. Though scenes of gaiety continually invited her, she often remained at home when she fancied she might soothe or enliven him; and when she learned his purpose of departure, and saw the preparations making, she did not disguise the sorrow she felt.

Arthur, Mrs. Trevor, and Sir Ralph had all been precipitate in their conclusions respecting Marmion. He loved now, perhaps, it might be said, for the first time in his life; but his engagement to Esther made him hesitate to avow the passion he felt, before which his love for Esther faded like fire before the sun. She had kindled admiration, and inflamed his fancy: Magdalene had awakened affection, and touched his heart. Hitherto he had been too presumptuous, too confident, and with the common multitude this had been but too successful; but he had instinctively felt that Magdalene might not be thus



approached, and the more he saw of her the more he felt the conviction. He stood rebuked by her innocence as much as he was attracted by her beauty. Hence Marmion had betrayed, not declared his love.

Had he done so, Magdalene would not have concealed the circumstance from Mrs. Trevor. To reveal it might have cost her an effort, for the very young shrink with instinctive diffidence from making such communications. But admonitions of a mother, who seemed still to speak to her from the grave, had warned her against the misery and the guilt that often creep insidiously into mystery ; and she would, therefore, have hid nothing from her that stood in the stead of that parent, and was scarcely less dear.

Much mischief arises from the inaptitude there exists for seeking or making explanations. People will conjecture and endeavour, by indirect means, to gain confirmation of the fears or hopes that agitate them ; when, would they quit

these by-paths for the open road of inquiry, their object might be attained at once, and the delay consequent in all such cases is sure to tangle the thread of circumstances, till confusion confirms the mischief suspicion began.

Mrs. Trevor saw with some displeasure, and too little allowance for Magdalene's youth, and the fascinations spread for her at the Park, that Beeshome had lost its paramount estimation in her mind: hence Agnes had neglected to draw on the confidence which might so easily have been won. It requires an effort to yield up to another the heart's secret feelings, but they fall like dew upon the love that woos them. Mrs. Trevor was also stung as a mother; she could scarcely pardon the blindness that could not see Arthur's merit, or forgive the injustice that preferred an inferior. It is thus that our virtues are neighboured by our vices; and in cases where self becomes too intimately concerned, so few can judge justly.

Arthur was the only one that wore an

aspect of cheerfulness on the morning of his departure.

"You shall *hear* of me," he whispered to Mrs. Trevor. "I may cost you a tear, mother—*that* I cannot help; but never a blush, for that I can. You will remember that of which we spoke last night: guard her from calamity—she is too guileless to guard herself. I would rather hear of *her* happiness than realize my own."

These words Arthur uttered as he led his mother to the breakfast-room, where his father and the rest of the family were seated. Every eye rested on Arthur as he entered: he felt the overpowering influence of the affection and regret that were universally expressed, but he did not quail; he felt he should have time enough for tears when no heart need be wrung by seeing how fast, how bitterly they fell.

The task he had enjoined himself was, however, one of more difficulty than he had anticipated. His father met him with affectionate

gravity, and they spoke of his letters of introduction, and of parties it was probable he might meet, with apparent indifference ; but the sadness of Hubert, regarding whom Arthur reproached himself with some instances of anger and injustice, went deep to his heart. All the brother-love that had grown with their growth, and strengthened with their strength, throbbed in its pulses ; and he could have cast himself on his brother's breast, and wept aloud. But he restrained his rising feelings, as he recollected that Hubert intended to ride the first stage with him, and they might then speak of the past, and exchange forgiveness for the treasons they had committed against affection, to which the moment of passion had given birth, but to which the moment of parting would give a grave.

To sustain his spirits and dissipate the melancholy that sat on the face of even the youngest of those he was about to leave, Arthur was lavish of promises :—to one he engaged to

write from this place, to another from that ; while gifts, suited to the various ages, tastes, and studies of each, were largely spoken of. The boys grew loud and eager in their demands upon their brother's remembrance ; but the girls were infinitely less relieved and excited. One, the youngest, a fair thing of four years old, sat with her little hands dropped into her lap, and sighed as if her heart was fuller than it could bear. Arthur's eyes rested on her, struck by the contrast to her habitual vivacity that she presented. The tripping step had changed to stillness—the sparkling brow was touched with thought ; the laughing eye that used to flash with light, floated in tears, and the red lip quivered with emotion.

Arthur rose and took her in his arms ; she clasped his neck, and stooping her little face to his, she kissed him repeatedly. Finding himself unable to preserve his composure, he walked with her into a small conservatory, which the breakfast-room joined.

"What shall Arthur send Louisa?" he cried, wiping his eyes with her frock.

Shaking her head, she lisped "Nothing," in a tone scarcely audible. Just then Magdalene, who had not yet joined the breakfast table, entered at an opposite door. The child stretched her hand towards her, and Magdalene sprung forward. Arthur felt himself tremble, and sunk into a seat. Though Louisa had invited the approach of her favourite, she had no intention of quitting her brother; but leaning forward, she drew Magdalene to her, and whispered, between rising sobs,—

"Tell Arthur not to go away."

"This is more than I can bear," said Arthur, rising. "Take her, Miss Melburn;" and drawing Louisa's arm from his neck, he resigned her; but instantly again bending down, he kissed her fondly.

"Magdalene too — Magdalene too!" exclaimed the little girl, who, till Arthur talked of going away, had loved Magdalene better

than any one else. Arthur could not resist the invitation which the infant gave, and Magdalene did not deny. The next moment he was gone, and he had rode some distance ere Hubert overtook him.

Though Magdalene knew not the treasure she had lost, she was touched with deep regret, and yielded to a flood of tears before she entered the breakfast-room. It was vacant—all had fled away ; some to catch the last glimpse of Arthur from the windows that commanded a view of his road ; others had ran round by footpaths, in the hope of meeting him ; while the servants, with whom he had last parted, stood like statues on the spot where he had left them. Everything seemed to mourn the loss of one that had been the grace of his home ; the doors swung loose on their hinges, as those that had issued through had not allowed themselves time to close them ; there was a stillness, as if a death had happened, and the motion of active happiness been suddenly arrested.

Magdalene seated herself in the room usually at that hour thronged with bright faces and happy hearts, and she wept anew as the contrast affected her already-shaken spirits. In this mood she was found by Malfort, who came too late to bid Arthur adieu, but perhaps as early as he desired.

"I *do* love that young man!" he exclaimed, taking Louisa on his knee. "He is so good, so kind; he makes such allowance, I am sure he would not hurt a worm."

"May no worm hurt him!" cried Mrs. Trevor, as she entered the room, looking little pleased with the presence of the Professor.

"Ah! madam!" he cried, rising; but deficient of language, or confused by her manner, he said no more till, recollecting himself, he added, "I am sorry to be so late: Mr. Trevor, I hear, is gone. I had in my mind to give him some letters of introduction."

"I am obliged to you," said Mrs. Trevor, coldly, as she doubted equally the Professor's



power or intention to give any such things. Habitually cautious as he was, had he connexions worth speaking of, even he would at some time or other have mentioned them. They that keep such strict guard, she calculated, knew themselves to be vulnerable ; they must impute or possess evil designs, and in either case she liked them not.

Malfort, when he found Mrs. Trevor not likely again to retire, abridged his visit ; and she having attained her object, engaged in that active employment which is the best antidote to sorrow or bad spirits. Her children, as usual, encircled her, and Arthur was spoken of, and his return anticipated, ere he had well set out on his progress.

Two points Mrs. Trevor had especially devoted herself to effect for her children, and they had been attended by the happiest results. The first was to keep them continually employed : she thus realized a disposition to industry, and destroyed the whole train of mischiefs that

spring out of listlessness and objectless leisure. The second was the cultivation of domestic politeness, the kindly courtesy that keeps affection from the shock of too rude familiarity, and preserves that which it overlays. "It is a polish," to use the language of the admirable Miss Edgeworth, "very different from that varnish which is often hastily applied to hide imperfections. This polish is of the substance itself, to be obtained only by long use; but once acquired, lasting for ever: not only beautiful, but serviceable, preserving from the injuries of time and from the dangers of familiarity."

About this time preparations were going forward to celebrate Marmion's coming of age; an event which the vanity of Lady Beaucaire and the ambition of her husband made them resolve to signalize with suitable splendour. But none were on this occasion so active as Mr. Coverley: the unextinguished virulence of his resentments acted no less than his pride and affection as a stimulant to his proceedings. Rich and poor,

amounting to many hundreds, were invited, not only to partake a festival, but to signalize a triumph. It was not enough that those that loved him should be glad, and those that served him should rejoice ; his vindictiveness desired the presence of his enemies, that he might prove to them, as he expressed it, that he and his had survived the blight of their malignant wishes.

Avarice never unlocks its chest but at the command of ostentation, and indolence never toils but at the bidding of vanity : they do not, however, acknowledge the masters they serve, or they change their names, which serves as well. Ostentation is called hospitality, and received as such by his company, though treated of by his true title in their after comments. Vanity is met by smiles, but followed by sneers ; and the more vanity people have of their own, the less they can endure that of others, and this accounts for the general disgust it provokes. It is the offended vanity within that cries aloud against the offensive vanity without.

The family at the Park were preparing to exhibit more than they desired should be seen; their friends were preparing to perceive more than it was imagined they would discover. Infinitely diverting to the observer of life is the panorama of the world.

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## CHAPTER III.

MARMION had been absent a few weeks from Suffolk, when, on the morning of his birth-day, he drove to Vex'em Park, amid greeting he was in no mood to return. But Lady Beaucaire, who was in the carriage with him, having been herself in the metropolis upon some mission of vanity, played the condescending and agreeable. As the carriage stopped, Malfort was the first that appeared to receive them: when he had assisted her ladyship to alight, Marmion sprang forth, and, unheeding the voice of Mr. Coverley, who called to him, walked sullenly away. Some hours after, when Marmion returned, having, probably, walked off the moody humour that had seized him, he found Sir Ralph and Lady Beaucaire sur-

rounded by a few of their more familiar friends; and expecting the more formal.

"Who do you imagine," asked Beaucaire, addressing his mother, "was the first person that gave me welcome?"

"So many simultaneous voices welcomed you," she replied, "that it were difficult to say who was first."

"I mean individual, not collective greeters," said Marmion.

"It was me—I think—I hope at least," said Malfort, with an obsequious deference, that he did not now wear as frequently as formerly.

"If you did, I did not heed you," said Marmion, carelessly. "The first salutation that called me to myself was from Mad Maude, the village witch."

"Were I given to superstition," said Lady Beaucaire, "I should deem that an ill omen; for, truly, an evil spirit seems to dwell with that woman."

Malfort slightly smiled—it might more properly be said sneered, only that the expression of contempt and ridicule was too transient, too faint, to deserve so decided a description.

“ Say not so,” cried Marmion, “ she drove the blue devils out of me. I laughed *at* her and *with* her, fantastic and fiery as she is, till the echoes grew merry betwixt us. Do you know, Malfort, *you* are no favourite of hers.”

Lady Beaucaire involuntarily turned her eyes to the Professor. He only smiled, and shrugged his shoulders with an expression of acquiescence and indifference.

“ There is often about lunatics,” said Mrs. Trevor, “ an intuitive quickness and penetration that is like the acuteness of children. We cannot perceive *how* they arrive at their deductions, but we often find they arrive at the right ones.”

Malfort felt, at that moment, a secret uneasiness, and still more secret detestation ; emotions that Mrs. Trevor often excited within

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him; but in the calmest possible voice he observed, that as gentleness and humility were the best evidence of sense, so violence and pride were indubitable proofs of madness.

"Aye; that is well enough for a phrase," said Mr. Coverley. "It is pretty in sound, but perfectly without substance. Let any one tell me, that the proud and the violent man is not a better creature than one of your neither-one-thing-nor-another sort of gentry, that, like the man in the fable, blow hot and cold with the same breath. I never forgave an injury, or forgot a benefit."

"It is a favourite idea," said Mr. Trevor "that [such a balance exists. But I am disposed to question, whether the sternest foe really makes also the firmest friend, or that violent revenge and strong gratitude can have place in the same breast. The gross and all-absorbing principle of selfishness that exists in these violent characters is inimical to all unselfish feeling; the tenure of friendship in such hearts



must be held, as a feudal fief was of old, by undeviating obedience, and a perpetual and abject confession of inferiority. I think with Cæsar, that ‘no man ever gratified his own headstrong inclination, and at the same time answered any valuable purpose.’”

Mr. Coverley frowned ; some present smiled, and thought, had Mr. Trevor been a retainer, he had not spoken so much with impunity.

“ Violence,” resumed Mr. Trevor, “ never yet accomplished anything that might not have been done better and quicker by gentleness. Violence is the instrument of ignorance, and hence the child and the savage are so fond of seizing it, as well as men and women that are scarcely less crude—excess is the grand error of the moral world.”

“ If it be an error,” said Marmion, “ why do we find it in the physical world? The heavens speak in thunder, the earth in convulsion, and wind and waters in storm and fury.”

“ Let us avoid analogies ; they often confuse, seldom assist an argument,” said Mr. Trevor. “ The physical world is one thing, the moral world another. In the one, we have little power, in the other a great deal. We may not say to the raging wave, thus far shalt thou go, and no farther ; but we may to the rising passion.”

“ I’ll be shot if poor Clare did not make you as crazy as himself,” suddenly interrupted Mr. Coverley. “ And succeeding years, instead of curing, have confirmed your insanity.”

The arrival of guests, who now began to pour in, closed this conversation. The spirit of revelry awakened, the crowd increased, glad voices, gay smiles, and dancing steps attested the general disposition to mirth and merriment, when Mr. Coverley, who was in the centre of a principal group, uttered a deep groan, and fell from his chair. He was instantly raised ; and it was apparent that he was attacked by a fit : his neckcloth was unloosed, every expedient

that presented itself was adopted—medical aid was immediately present—all in vain, Mr. Coverley had been raised from the floor a corpse !

In a moment, as if by magic, the aspect of everything was changed. Death, like a giant, had stalked in upon the scene, and the affrighted spirits of pleasure and festivity fled before him. Mourning rose in the place of mirth, and joy was struck dumb by fear. The bells changed their glad chimes for the solemn knell, and the crowds that had come to revel, departed to reflect. The mansion that had swung its portals wide, that was blazing with lights within and without, and echoing with music to welcome its thronging guests, closed its gates, and darkened its chambers and its halls, across which the few friends that remained trod timidly, as if they feared to profane the silence and solemnity of death.

And what was he, so lately the first mover in the pageant, that had just evaporated—he that was so lately animated by all the burning

bitter passions that mar the happiness of humanity? What was he? A thing, that the meanest among those he hated might now spurn. What availed his wealth, which had dazzled others and deluded himself? All the wine in his cellars could not warm the congealing current of his heart. All the massy plate that piled his board could not form a shield to ward the invisible dart by which he fell. The hatred he provoked—the love he prized—foes, friends, and confederates were a nullity to him; he had passed the bourne beyond which their grasp cannot extend.

Powerful upon all was the effect of an event so awful, and so sudden in its awfulness. But none felt as did Marmion. Mr. Coverley had been removed to his own room, and every effort to restore animation tried anew: those that administered knew the futility of the attempt; but the anxieties of affection could not otherwise be appeased. Marmion was in the room, and when he was, at last, told all hope was over

—that life was utterly and for ever extinct, he uttered a cry of self-execration, that might be likened to no sound that had ever left human lips. Its suddenness—its discordance—sent a thrill of horror through the frame of all that heard it. With that sound he had dashed himself on the floor, and every attempt to move him was vain.

“Leave me,” at length he cried, in a low hollow voice.

“Yes,” replied Sir Ralph, “we will leave you ; but not here.”

“Here, here !” rejoined Marmion. “Here—alone with the dead.”

It had grown into a rule not to oppose Marmion when he was strongly moved. It was a precautionary measure, for everything was to be dreaded from the excess of his violence—the fearful, delicate structure of the human frame, the wonderful machinery of the human mind, had often surrendered some principal chord of its fabric in weaker paroxysms than Marmion

was often shaken by. Sir Ralph, and those with him, retreated, therefore, at his stern bidding, but only to the next room; while Malfort had taken the precaution to remove every instrument that madness might employ to the purpose of self-destruction.

They heard the frantic mourner rise and go to the bed on which the unrepenting dead was extended. He made a long pause; and then, as if thought had attained a climax, he once more uttered that fearful sound, and once more cast him on the floor, on which they heard him grovel, and then beat, till tears came bubbling like water through a passage not large enough for the torrent that sought to discharge itself: deep heavy sobs followed, as if nature was becoming exhausted; these occurred at intervals, more and more distant—at last ceased altogether, and all was still.

After an interval, Sir Ralph, Malfort, Hubert, and Forrester, (Marmion's own servant,) cautiously entered the room. Beaucaire lay in

a deep sleep; without awakening him they succeeded in bearing him to his own chamber. Malfort and Forrester sat up with him the whole night; but he lay in lethargic repose like that which follows intoxication. It was late the next morning when he awoke. He dressed in silence, breakfasted alone, went to the game-keeper's lodge, and the frequent report of his gun throughout the day told how he employed himself. The day following he wore his ordinary manner when oppressed with gloom and dissatisfaction: he was reserved and silent; but there was no trace of the tenderness of sorrow, or sympathy with the sadness of others.

At Sir Ralph's desire, a day was appointed for the reading of Mr. Coverley's will. He had reasons to know that the eccentric mind had given some particular directions about the disposition of its body, and the survivors were solicitous to fulfil these commands whatever they were, if practicable. All the relations were assembled on this occasion, and some intimate friends and

dependents were invited; of the former, Sir Ralph peculiarly regarded Mrs. Trevor, and she accordingly had place. She came chiefly as a spectator; seating herself in a remote corner of the library, she noted the actors in this interlude between the tragedy of death, and the farce of the funeral.

Every individual, however agitated by secret interests, came with a sober external bearing; and all affected some degree of mourning, however little they might feel. Lady Beaucaire was principally studious to look graceful in her dejection, and no pulse, no emotion interfered with the anxiety that gave elegance to her attitude and the fall of her draperies. Sir Ralph was deeply and truly touched—but he too was an actor; and with the composed gravity of good sense, he mixed the imposing manner that he well knew operates on the multitude, habituated to admire and to bow to those that play the superior gracefully and confidently.

Marmion, of all others most concerned in the



event of the scene, was not present ; but Malfort was. He sat with his arms folded, and his head bowed upon his chest.

The will was short, and bore indubitable marks of the hand from which it came. Mr. Coverley desired to be placed after death in an upright coffin, and to be buried standing, adding that though death might knock, it should not keep, him down ; and that at the sound of the last trumpet, he should be the sooner ready to march, by being already on his legs. The whole of his property, real and personal, he bequeathed to Marmion Coverley Beaucaire, but in trust to Sir Ralph Beaucaire and Ernest Malfort, till Marmion should attain his twenty-fifth year. Sir Ralph and Malfort were likewise appointed joint guardians of Beaucaire, and joint executors of the will.

During the reading of this singular document, which also contained some disgraceful mementoes of resentment, a smile, scarcely perceptible, played on the compressed lips of Malfort ;

at the same instant, with a glance, rapid and searching as light, his eyes visited the countenances of Sir Ralph and Lady Beaucaire—took in, with one quick and comprehensive view, many other faces present, and then again the lids and pale lashes fell and shrouded the index of his mind. But Mrs. Trevor, whose observation had rested principally upon Malfort, had read that look,—callous curiosity and reckless design was written in it, while the accelerated pulsation of a pleased, probably a surprised heart, heightened the colour in his cheek. Nature is essentially honest; and the most practised in deception, when strongly moved, cannot command the flow of the blood, or the flash of the eye.

Various and powerful was the effect this will produced. Many who had come with a moral and professed certainty that they should not be named in it, evinced, when these anticipations were confirmed, mortification and disappointment; but the veil of assumed indifference was dropped over the various shades of angry feel-

ing, not, however, effectually : there is an effort in all assumption that betrays itself ; it is only a cast from the original, which retains the outline, but wants the grace and ease of life. Sir Ralph, much as he guarded his feelings, betrayed some surprise, but no displeasure ; Lady Beaucaire seemed less surprised and more pleased than her husband.

The meeting dispersed, and attention was next engaged by arrangements for the funeral. That ceremony, in which humanity (from birth to death a tool in the hands of others) plays its last part in the show of society, and is borne an effigy of vanity, to the sepulchre of corruption. Neither in these arrangements did Marmion take act or part, and none, by word from his lips, knew how he was affected by his uncle's will. But the new fetter of a protracted minority brought to his cheek the flush of anger, called up the rebellious pulses of his pride, and clouded his mind with anxiety and distraction. When the first paroxysm of his grief had exhausted itself, in the

calm that succeeded, he became acutely sensible to the pleasure of the command of an ample fortune, which he then confidently anticipated ; it promised to release him from embarrassments that, in spite of every effort, embittered his life ; to shelter him from exposure, which, in spite of bravado, he dreaded ; to realize pleasure for which, in the midst of all that surrounded him, he panted. The springs of his mind, that excessive agony had relaxed, the promises of fortune restored ; but an intuitive sense of shame reproved his satisfaction ; and, like the proud pilgrim of old, he clothed his hopes in sackcloth, and shrouded his thoughts in silence. None are incommunicative by nature ; taciturnity grows either from despair of finding sympathy, or shame of seeking it : the fountains of the pure heart love to leap into light—it is the unfortunate or debased bosom that lets its tide run darkly, silently, and in secret.

The unlooked-for arrangements of Mr. Coverley's will threw Marmion back upon all the

anxieties from which he imagined he was about to escape. His creditors, extortionate and insatiate, who had been kept at bay, by the hope of an event which came but to realize despair, would now come on in full yell, like the savage, and take revenge if they might not obtain redress. The highest mountains are neighboured by the deepest vales ; and the sternest pride is associated with the meanest fears. Marmion bitterly felt the triumph obtained over him by those he had contemned ; dreaded the sneers of some he had exultingly outvied, and the malice of many he had wantonly provoked. Those that play at the game of life would do well to remember that there is no calculating, in the shuffle of circumstances, what the next deal may produce,—who may hold trumps, and take the last trick.

The state of Malfort's mind presented a strong contrast to Beaucaire's. His triumph was as perfect as the latter's mortification was complete. Perhaps none are more surprised at the success-

ful issue of a scheme than the very rogue that achieves it ; because, having tact enough to put matters in a train, they work out their own accomplishment ; and he, conscious of the smallness of his efforts, and his total absence of desert, naturally wonders, in the secret recesses of his soul, at the great result.

Malfort was one of those moral enigmas that baffles inquiry. He was at once profound and shallow ; for whatever skill may be exerted to do evil, the doing it shows the mind to be essentially unsound. He had courage and cowardice ; he dare to do acts that, if detected, would overwhelm him with disgrace and misery, and he lived in apprehensive watchfulness, through fear of their revealment. He had pride and humility ; he was inflated with the consciousness of crafty power ; but he could cringe to the power that mastered him. He was social and selfish ; he loved society, and seemed to enjoy sympathy ; but perhaps his ministry to that was the veriest selfishness, for self-gratifi-

cation, in some form or other, was the alpha and omega of all his actions. He was industrious and idle ; possessed a restless activity that kept him ever originating something, but, with an inaptitude for regular and continued labour, he in reality did nothing.

Perhaps a perfect anatomy of his character none could bear, but those familiar with the disgusting details of the moral dissecting-room ; who know what humanity is, what it may be made, and how it is made what it often becomes ; who love it too well in its beauty, not to pity it in its debasement.

While almost every one regarded Malfort as a being of the blindest and most unselfish benevolence, living and acting for and with his fellow-creatures, he was in fact a creature of the meanest and most selfish motives, preying on and perverting all he approached. He professedly squared the rule of right and wrong by the advantage or disadvantage to society ; on this comprehensive principle he could allow himself

to do individual mischief, under pretence of producing collective benefit. *His* was one of those grand moral theories by which wholesale philosophers become retail rogues.

Mirabeau says, "every man makes his own conscience." It is curious to observe how many verify this wide theorem. Malfort had probably fabricated a conscience for himself, which, in a measure, reconciled him to his crooked policy; and he had probably sophistry enough to persuade himself he was not the utter villain that he was; while success, that deludes all, flattered him into a conviction of superior ability, and fortified him with a bulwark of self-conceit. The continental latitudes seem highly favourable to the maturity of this mental weed. It were gross partiality to pretend that any virtue or any vice is confined to any particular clime; but the moral, like the natural atmosphere, may in each have a powerful effect in quickening or retarding the growth of some more than others. A peculiar strength of patriotism



is ascribed to the inhabitants of mountainous countries, and assuredly a blushless power of self-praise is not unfrequently a pre-eminent characteristic of the native of the European continent. In calculating results, it is, however, a universal practice to strike the balance in our own favour. A game of chess is more often won through the inadvertency of our adversary than our own skill ; but who ever impeached the latter by making such an admission ?

Malfort did not reflect that for his advance he was indebted to what was allowed him, not to what he really possessed ; for, while affecting erudition, he was almost ignorant of even the commonest elements of ordinary education. In the circumstance of his being a foreigner—in the facility with which he made use of the talents of others, he sheltered his illiterateness ; and certainly, if to attain great ends with the smallest means be the perfection of wisdom, he, when he compared his pretension with his position, had some reason for holding himself, as he did, profoundly wise.

## CHAPTER IV.

THE day of Mr. Coverley's interment arrived, and a large company assembled. He had passed his life without attaching friends, yet his funeral had no lack of followers; who are as easily attracted by wealth as flies by honey, though, like them, they can often do little more than settle on the outside of the fabric by which it is preserved.

"This is a forecast of my fate," said Marmion to Hubert, as they stood apart from the rest of the mourners assembled in the large oak parlour. "This black mockery—that deep-mouthed bell, and all this mumbling and mummery, meant as a show of grief, are suited to a birthday,—are they not?" and his sarcastic smile harmonized with the irony of his tone.

"This is not your birthday?" said young

Trevor, perceiving the vein of superstition existing in Beaucaire's mind : " And if it was—? Every day some one or other of the human family fall ; therefore, as no day is exempt from, so none can be particularly marked by, the occurrence of death. But if the bolt falls not into our own exclusive circle, we heed it not."

" Hubert," said Marmion, " when cut to the quick or stabbed to the core, we must feel more than when remotely wounded. You knew little of that stern old man—few loved him. I did—for he loved *me*—with all my faults he loved me. God !" he exclaimed, yielding to one of his sudden and violent bursts of feeling, " how many wayward, wilful acts of insolent ingratitude rush back on my recollection ! The last, the very last words that he addressed to me, I heeded not ; I turned from him as regardlessly as if I owed him neither duty nor affection ; and when we met again—*he* was a corpse !"

Marmion turned rapidly to avoid the observation his vehemence had attracted, and left the

room. His purpose of crossing the hall was interrupted by the appearance of the coffin and its bearers, who seemed as if supporting a black tower, as with slow and measured steps they passed on. Marmion stood and looked after them, and then followed with a rapid pace; paused to see the dead placed in the funeral carriage, and ere the attendants could close it, he put them back on either hand, and, with an air that forbade all opposition, entering it, bade them shut the door. They hesitated to obey, till Malfort, who, with Hubert, had come in pursuit of Marmion, desired them to comply with the request, while he went to inform Sir Ralph of the eccentric conduct of his son.

Marmion, as usual, resisted all expostulation, and the carriage moved away, with the living and the dead, towards the place of interment, while a long train of mourning coaches and private carriages followed in succession. At the same church, where, twenty years before, Mr.

Coverley attended Marmion's baptism with pride and pleasure, Marmion now ministered at Mr. Coverley's funeral with abasement and anguish. An overwhelming consciousness of his own unfortunate, imperfect character at times bowed Beaucaire to the dust; but they were desolating gusts of emotion and remorse on which no amendment followed; he held them rather as atoning sacrifices, that left him free to fall into new error.

Mr. Coverley's memory passed from the mind of Beaucaire with a rapidity and entirety proportioned to the violence of the grief he had exhibited. Marmion returned to the metropolis to renew the dissipation of manners and distress of mind which, in their reaction, augmented each other. He loved Magdalene, but his perjured heart and embarrassed fortune were ill offerings to make to a creature so innocent and so beautiful: besides, now another idea had seized on his mind—Esther, if no longer an

object of love, remained one of interest, and marriage might work the redemption he had hoped from his majority.

Esther had enjoined her grandfather to keep her secret ; had refused to doubt of Marmion's love, or to believe in his ruin. Excess of light does not so surely blind those on whom it falls as excess of love ; and thankless is his office that attempts to warn, or tries to save the being so infatuated. Since the open course of exposition promised to avail him nothing, Mezrack resolved to embrace less ingenuous measures. Without exactly betraying Esther to her father, he stimulated him to remove her again, for a short time, from England. The suggestion was opportunely made ; the Baron contemplated a visit to Vienna, and his daughter became the companion of his expedition. This point, which it had taken time and skill to gain, being won, Mezrack next resolved to bring Marmion's affairs to a crisis. He easily drew into his own hands the power that might

crush that ill-guided young man ; but Mezrack designed to use it with mercy, and to remit much, upon obtaining from him a solemn renunciation of Esther. However fatal it may be to want caution, it is sometimes ruinous to adopt too much, especially if opposed to those prone to rapid and sudden evolutions. If the weapon be shown, the blow is best struck ; or it may be parried successfully, or avoided altogether. Marmion, who had long had a prescience of the coming storm, was prepared, at the first growl of the thunder, to fly to shelter. This he hoped from his mother, at least through her means. He believed she possessed the power of softening his father, and influencing Malfort, and he resolved to put it to the test.

The departure of Esther was at once mortification and relief to him. Mortification, since it interfered with the plans that he had proposed to himself ; and relief, since it allowed him respite from the practice of deception ; in

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which he was too deeply embarked to retreat. Not that this was his first essay in the science ; but it was the first time he had abused confidence so perfect, or a woman wearing the lofty character that Esther did. Gaiety, gallantry, and flattery had embroidered the hours that he devoted to her, and the glitter of society assisted him in the part he played ; but it was irksome in the exercise, and painful and depressing in its after influence. He was not the vulgar sinner, that can glory in successful artifice, and laugh at the deceived. Though immersed in difficulty, tangled in deceits, and enslaved to his passions and his selfishness, he felt the internal degradation that cleaves to *him* who *knows* what is right, but *does* that which is wrong. The deceiver may have his triumphs, but they are dearly bought ; there are few shafts that do not strike in their recoil more severely than in their original aim.

Marmion set out on horseback for his journey, divested of all those fiery excitements that



in general moved him. He seemed disposed to try how he could look ruin in the face; to attempt to hold a parley with the enemy, to whom, it was probable, he should be obliged, at no very distant time, to surrender. Leaving the high and frequented roads, he struck into those sequestered paths which the young summer made so delightful. Though not a lover of nature, (for he had been nurtured in the hot-house of vanity, till his senses were too much blunted to perceive inartificial beauty,) a vague charm stole over him, as he passed along the neat hawthorn hedges, bowed his head to avoid the leafy branches of overspreading trees, and felt the air bathe him with a flood of sweets, as soothing to his feelings as it was invisible to his sight.

Nature, like every gentle mother, ever blesses those that turn to her: she is all unobtrusiveness—spreads her wealth before us, but does not press it on us. Those that pass her by neglectfully, she pursues with a smile of pity:

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those that pause to love her, and to learn of her, she meets with gladness and "exceeding great reward."

Marmion had dismounted, and was leading his horse at the full length of his bridle, in order to allow himself the advantage of shade from a high and beautiful hedgerow, when he was attracted by voices on the other side. Without any mean purpose of listening, but rather from a thoughtless desire of amusement, he gave ear to the speakers.

"And after all I have gone through—with all that has passed through my hands—is it come to this?"

The voice was that of an aged woman, and the tone was expressive of sorrow, blended with resignation.

"I think," she resumed, "after all these years, it is time I rested from the toils and anxieties of life. Had I been the wife and mother of peasants, I had been better off."

"Ellen," resumed the widow, after a pause,

“ have you not told your brother what is our state; reminded him, that while I had anything to yield, that it was taken from me ; and that *now*——”

“ Mother, he knows all this without my telling. If his own heart cannot prompt him to act by you like a son, and by me like a brother, let him go. I do not even now despair. The situation to which I am going may turn up friends, for I shall try to deserve them. You must go into the workhouse; but you shall not stay there—if *I* live and have health.”

“ If your father can look down from Heaven upon me now,” said the poor woman ; “ but no, Heaven forbid he should. For I have little deserved all I have been doomed to suffer ! Had I served strangers, in the capacity of a common hireling, as I have served my husband and my children, I should have been able to have saved that which would have kept me from want and a workhouse. But God’s will, not mine, be done !”

“ Mother, bear up,” said Ellen ; “ even there, as you have done everywhere, you will command respect ; and if you have a child that neglects you, you also have one that never will. God forgive *his* sins, who, out of all he has drank, could never think to bring a single bottle of wine to an aged, an infirm, and long-suffering mother ; and God bless *her* endeavours who yet hopes to bring you many.”

“ My greatest grief, Ellen, even now, is that you are the sharer of mine. For the few years, or days, that I have to spend in the world, God knows, it is little matter where I spend them. But I shrink from the workhouse, as much for your sake as my own. I know the reproachful world : though the Great Master had not where to lay his head, the disciple of poverty is crucified by contempt, as he was on the cross——”

“ Mother, it is written that the humble shall be exalted, that the mourner shall be comforted, and the merciful find mercy. Let us trust to God, and try for ourselves. As for

my brother, the world has made him what he is: he will one day be more to be pitied than we are now—though subsisting on dry bread, and travelling on foot to find more. Even now, while yet reflection has not reached him, he is not happy—what will he be when remorse shall come? And come it will: the accusing voice of conscience may tarry till the eleventh hour; but it comes at last, and, like the last trump, must be heard by the sinner!"

Ellen and her mother reached a stile, over which they were preparing to climb just as he came up, and proffered them assistance. His aid was modestly accepted, and acknowledged with the easy courtesy of habitual good breeding. They were dressed with neatness and propriety; and had he not overheard their conversation, he should never have imagined they were in distress. He suffered them to pass him, that he might reconnoitre their appearance, and recover his own spirits; for he had been deeply touched by all he had

heard them utter. Poverty and calamity he knew but by name; he understood distress and embarrassment as arising from extravagance—nothing more; but now the objects of actual privation and unmerited suffering were before his eyes, and every better feeling of his heart was stirred. He forgot himself and his own difficulties in the sorrows of Ellen and her mother, and that not because the former made any appeal to his admiration; she was an undistinguished girl, with little to recommend her but neatness and propriety. No: his emotion was compassion in its purest form: perhaps his heart was full of such redeeming springs, had circumstances allowed them to be opened.

He saw the mother and daughter enter a little road-side public-house, and thither, having disposed of his horse, he followed them. He had no occasion to make inquiry; for, seated in the common room—in which, however, there was no guest but themselves—he perceived them par-

taking of some bread and milk. He asked the good woman of the house if he could have a private room : she pushed open the door of the back parlour, and he entered it. He next inquired into the state of her larder, and a couple of chickens and some bacon were proposed to him, on his desiring dinner for three persons. His hostess received his orders with much satisfaction, but much more surprise when they concluded with a desire that she would inform the widow and her daughter, who were sitting in the public room, that a gentleman wished to speak with them, and begged the favour of their coming to him.

In a few minutes they appeared. Marmion rose, and received them in a more happy manner than he had ever received guest before : grace was habitual to him, but he now superadded good nature.

“ I am, madam,” he said, addressing the elder, “ like yourselves—travelling this road at my leisure ; and I hope you will relieve me from

the necessity of taking a solitary meal, by dining with me?"

"Sir," cried the widow, greatly surprised, but with great presence of mind, "we are no guests for a gentleman of your appearance."

She could scarcely have made an apter reply as regarded the character of the individual she addressed. He loved the consciousness of rank, and to know that he carried the evidence of it about him.

"I rather think you do yourself injustice," he replied. "It is not so easy to lose *caste* as you seem to think; and whatever my rank, I am sure it will suffer nothing from your association. Pray sit down," he added, placing chairs, "for I own I have something to say to you."

The mother and daughter obeyed, exchanging a slight look of surprise. Marmion's address had a charm they powerfully felt, and it enabled him, in the easiest manner, to glide into conversation till dinner appeared. It was the most delightful meal he had ever eaten: and, though



new to the pleasures of hospitality, and habituated to the mere forms of etiquette, he pressed the widow and Ellen to eat with the reiterated earnestness of good nature that the rich never practise, because the whole business of their entertainments is but show and mockery.

When the repast was ended, he ordered a bottle of the best wine the house afforded, and some fruit. When he had thus fortified the spirits of his guests, he reverted to their circumstances.

"Shall I own to you, madam," he cried, after he had in vain pressed the widow and Ellen to take a second glass of wine, "that I overheard the conversation in which you were engaged as you came through the meadow at the stile of which I met you? I ought to apologize for the impertinence of listening; but really at first I hearkened through mere inadvertency—that I continued so to do, is as much your fault as my own. There was a truth and simplicity in all you said, that riveted my

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attention and touched my heart. You must forgive me, and allow me to know more of you."

"You have little more to know, sir," she replied, after a pause; "since I believe that conversation contained the sum of my sorrows. I might, had those connected with me had common prudence—I may say, and I grieve to say, if some of them had common feeling—I might have lived in prosperity, and died in peace."

"Have you no relations besides the son I heard you name?" said Marmion.

"None of my own, sir," she rejoined. "I left Wales when very young. I never have had, nor sought to have, friends beyond the husband and the children to whose welfare my life has been one long scene of the strictest devotion."

"Then that young lady has no relations but you and her brother?" said Beaucaire.

"Yes, sir; many on her father's side," said the widow.

“ And can they afford to do nothing for her ?”

“ They might, for they are wealthy and well allied ; and one, very near to her in blood, is a preacher of that Gospel that breathes the very spirit of love and charity.”

“ Has she ever been introduced to them ?” said Marmion, in an extenuating tone, willing to present a shield before his own order of society.

“ Introduced I have been,” said Ellen, her spirit rising as she spoke, “ but nothing more. I would not court, and my sensitive nature needed more cordiality than I met from them. I was, perhaps, too retiring, as they were too reserved ; but had they kindly hearts, they would have sought me. No unworthy suspicion could be attached to them by so doing, because they were rich ; but such might have attached to me, had I sought them—for I was poor.”

“ I fear,” said the widow, “ you would have sought them to little purpose. The mother that reared some of them, (for others, sir, she committed, in the first months of infancy, to rich and

childless relations, and thus made them aliens to natural affection,) that mother was as incapable of charity as God of injustice. She knew my necessities, knew that my board was scant, and my cup bitter; she never had the heart to give a guinea to my relief, while vanity and ostentation drew from her hundreds. If they, instead of charity, covered sins, verily she had gone to the grave in a goodly mantle."

Marmion smiled, and, reverting to her son, asked the widow if he too was wealthy.

"Far from it," was her reply, "though he had once an ample fortune; but he has still wherewithal to save him from the deadly sin of ingratitude for my care and callousness to my wants. There is great truth in a common saying, 'Where there is a will, there is a way.' But he has been too good a patron of the profligate and the publican to have any thing left to give a parent."

"I am sorry to see you so much moved,"

cried Beaucaire, refilling the widow's glass, as he saw her eyes fill with tears.

"Sir," she cried, interrupting him, "none can tell how hard it is to meet such return where you neither deserved nor expected to meet it. Harry Melburn, I may forgive, but I *never* shall forget your conduct!"

"Melburn!" repeated Beaucaire; "was he related to the Harry Melburn, of Rushmere, of whose estate a Mr. Coverley became the purchaser?"

"He was, sir, the possessor of that estate. It came to him by right of his wife: after the sale to Mr. Coverley; on the wreck of their fortune, they went to America, whence he returned about two or three years since. Mrs. Melburn is, I believe, dead, and all her children. I have never heard particulars, for he is singularly incommunicative."

"Then, madam," exclaimed Marmion, "I can tell you where you may find a relative; one

that I know will acknowledge you and succour you; one whom you will indeed love, and all beside might worship. Magdalene Melburn, your son's daughter, is now, I believe, at Rushmere, or very near it. She is the only woman that ever realized to me the idea of an angel!"

The old lady was deeply affected by this communication.

"O Ellen!" she exclaimed, after a time, "he that can neglect and forget his own children, can I wonder that he neglects and forgets me? The libertine has all the brute's indifference, without the brute's excuse for it; but he ensures a penalty that may well win the pity of even those that most spurn him. In the hour of remorse—and if it never reaches him, before it does at the hour of death—he hears 'a voice crying in the wilderness;' it is the voice of abandoned childhood, left by reckless selfishness to the wolves of society!"

Turning again to Marmion, she drew from him every particular with which he was ac-

quainted; and now, yielding herself to his guidance, allowed him to procure a post-chaise, in which they performed the rest of their journey. Arrived at Ipswich, he lodged them at an inn, gave orders to secure their meeting every attention and attendance, and made himself responsible for all expenses. Here he once more enjoyed refreshment with the grateful and reviving widow and her daughter, and bidding them not take a single step till they heard from him, sprung into his saddle, and turned his horse's head to Beeshome.

Marmion spurred on with a buoyant air and an animated aspect that he had experienced and exhibited on no former occasion. This was the first purely disinterested action he had ever performed; and though it became mixed, as he approached Beeshome, with thoughts of love and Magdalene, its grand stimulant was that glowing generosity which, it has been more wittily than wisely said, justice cannot keep pace with.

Hubert Trevor met Marmion just before he reached the house; he threw himself from his horse, and his first question was about Magdalene.

"I must see her immediately, and alone," he cried, as soon as he learned she was at home; "I have something of importance to communicate."

Hubert left him in the parlour, and went to seek her. She entered the room with looks in which surprise and welcome were blended; and she listened with astonishment and pleasure to such of the detail as Marmion chose to give of the adventure. Delicacy taught him to suppress all that might be grating to her feelings. He made no mention whatever of her father, leaving old Mrs. Melburn, if she judged proper, to reveal the circumstance of his being in England.

Magdalene immediately felt how powerless in herself she was, and was rising in eager haste to seek Mrs. Trevor and Hagar, when Marmion seized her hand and detained her.



"I am so selfish," he cried, "that I cannot consent to let you forget me in my mission. Pray command me: what is there I would not do at your bidding, or for any one dear to you?"

"You have already done a great deal," said Magdalene, averting her eyes, but not withdrawing her hand, "and I thank you with all my heart. Though I have many dear friends, I had no relations till you found these for me; and I shall ever remember to whom I owe them."

He pressed her hand to his lips: a few minutes after, leaving his compliments for the family, he was speeding onward to Vex'em Park. Magdalene displaced every other thought. His heart had never been so fit to receive her image; it came in harmony with all the kinder feelings he had been indulging, and seemed to crown them all.

With prompt benevolence, immediately on Magdalene's communication, Mrs. Trevor or-

dered the carriage, and accompanied the delighted girl to meet her grandmother and her aunt. Agnes went with no prepossession in their favour: the horror in which she held the destroyer of her friend, attached, in a degree, to all connected with him. But she did not long retain the unkind feeling, and readily reproached herself with injustice, ere she had been half an hour in the society of his mother and sister. They were distinguished by a total absence of affectation, and an apparent integrity that made itself felt. Unpretending and unassuming, they speedily assured Mrs. Trevor, that though they should be grateful for present aid, to save them from the necessity of stigmatizing the name, (of which Mrs. Melburn evidently thought more than of any personal suffering,) that they came not to press as idle pensioners on the bounty of Magdalene's friends. Ellen intimated her purpose of proceeding, on the next morning, to the situation she was engaged for, and stated that her earnings would be devoted to her mother,

and, sanctified to that purpose, she trusted God would give them increase. It was, therefore, arranged that Ellen and her mother should remain that night at Ipswich, since the former had to depart in a direction entirely opposite to Beeshome; and Magdalene promised to return in the morning early enough to take leave of her aunt, and take care of her grandmother, who was to have a temporary abode at the house of Mrs. Trevor.

Grateful to Magdalene's ear were the praises bestowed on Marmion, who had naturally made no small impression on those that he had so opportunely and so kindly assisted. The promptness of his charity, the grace and good feeling with which it was administered, the indifference to trouble on his own behalf, and his anxiety to give comfort and consolation on theirs, were all extolled in the highest terms, and greatly also had Marmion's modesty served him. In *his* account of the matter to Magdalene, his agency in all the more amiable points had

not been made apparent. He gained a high interest for this remission of his claim. Magdalene, as soon as she knew all, accused herself of great deficiency of acknowledgment, and longed to see him to atone for it.

"Yes, my love," cried Mrs. Melburn, "I cannot tell you how I have felt that young man's kindness. Novels and romances are the only places where *I* have met with generosity. There you hear of the spontaneous loan, the free, the anonymous gift, lest generosity should wound sensibility, or virtue meet any reward but the sense of being virtuous. Read no such trash, or, if you do, put down such portion of the book as I have just described as the purest fiction. No imagination ever thought of such wonderful events as real life presents—witness our own meeting; but life never realizes the generosity that the imaginative can conceive. If you would test your friend, touch his pocket. It communicates a spasm to his whole frame, that contracts the vessels of his heart, and all

you gain is another lesson in the severe science of experience."

This speech pleased Mrs. Trevor in the very proportion that it displeased Magdalene; and, had it not been qualified with the praise of Marmion, had been scarcely endurable to the young romantic listener, yet happily unconscious of aught but the sunny side of the moral world.

"I always," said Mrs. Trevor, "deemed money *attractive*, but I am indebted to you for the thought of its being *contractive*. I suppose this accounts for those that have least of it being ever most ready to part with what of it they have got; and those that have most, to part with no portion whatever. 'The itching palm' and the grasping hand have marked men since Sallust, and long before; and I could half forgive them, were they not so often gloved by the hypocrisy that pretends indifference to gain, and affects a disposition to generosity."

## CHAPTER V.

ABOUT noon the next morning, in accordance with his generally pernicious habits, Marmion rose, and, an hour or two after, found his way to Lady Beaucaire's boudoir. Never be it said that the chance distributions of ill fortune do not fall with singular disproportion upon some, more than upon others, and thus give a warrant to the common saying, that it is "better to be born fortunate than rich."

Ruffled by circumstances that had wounded her vanity, the most vulnerable part of her system; touched with some incipient fears that unharmonized her temper, sensible to little but external discipline; Marmion could scarcely have found his mother in a more unpropitious mood. With no preparation and but little preface he revealed the history of his embarrassment, which

having conned over for some hours in bed, he came prepared to state with the most unhesitating perspicuity. His communication fell on Lady Beaucaire with a weight that the weakness of her disturbed mind and disordered temper did not enable her to support with even ordinary composure. A passion of rage, unmixed with the slightest emotion of pity, seized her. Glad to vent at once all the brooding anger with which her breast was charged, she reproved Marmion with unmitigated severity. He, prone to feelings of the quickest and the strongest resentment, replied with intemperate heat ; and, eager to punish her for the pain he was made to suffer, he purposely wounded his mother where he fancied she was most susceptible to wounds—on the favouritism she extended to Malfort, and the power and influence he enjoyed. Once in mid career, Marmion spurred on, and the Professor fell beneath many a well-directed taunt and expression of deep-searching contempt. However inclined Lady

Beaucaire might now be to lower Malfort from the high place she had given him in her own esteem; however much reason she saw for so doing, she could not bear to hear the fact from another. The more she felt the truth of Marmion's sarcasms, the more deeply she resented them; and this interview ended by putting the cope-stone to Beaucaire's misfortunes. Her ladyship commanded him to quit her presence, and, breaking through her usual habits of indolence, went herself to meet Sir Ralph, in a rash and unreflecting desire to exert the power to punish her son, with which she believe herself armed.

Marmion, though he could deceive when circumstances rendered it expedient, had essentially none of the craft and cunning that belongs to caution. Neither, though rapid as light and often as true in his deductions, was he an observer of the passing circumstances of the current moment; he did not perceive, therefore could not penetrate the state of mind



of those before him ; he had, besides, no sufficient knowledge of human nature to assist, where he did stop to make such study.

On meeting his mother, he did not calculate whether or not she was disposed to hear him ; nor had he deemed it essential to make any material reservation in the confidence he meant to repose. He had, in fact, first drawn together all the main portions of the burden that oppressed him, and then thought of nothing more than seeking relief by discharging the load as speedily as possible, when he had once gained the place in which he meant to deposit it.

Sir Ralph was in the library when Lady Beaucaire entered it, pale and trembling, agitated with the sense of injury, the desire for revenge, which is often mistaken for a wholesome antipathy to error, and a wish to effect reform. Her husband listened to her with some portion of that contempt with which the calm usually regard the violent ; and so surely

does all excess defeat its own aim, that Sir Ralph put down much, that was absolute fact, to the account of exaggeration. It appeared as if Lady Beaucaire was reciting some empasioned part that she had carefully elaborated to the point of nature, and that Sir Ralph was sitting by as a critical spectator. However, he knew, that though events might be coloured, that names spoke to facts. He was familiar with that of Mezrack, the Jew money-lender; and he anticipated coming at more certain results by an hour's conversation with his shrewd mind, than in a month's communication with Lady Beaucaire's shallow and excited one. He knew the Jew's general residence was near Cambridge; he also knew that he made occasional visits to the metropolis; therefore Sir Ralph purposed to seek him at the first place, and failing of a meeting, to proceed to London. Without communicating any part of his intention to her Ladyship, he merely informed her that he should instantly

institute enquiry into the circumstances of which she had informed him ; that, with that view, he should immediately set out from the Park, and might not return for some days ; in which time he begged her to calm her spirits—to hope more, and fear less.

Such advice is much more easily given than taken. Lady Beaucaire retired to her boudoir—pronounced herself “not at home ;”—and, instead of endeavouring to soothe, sought every reflection that could inflame her mind. She was in a state of considerable exhaustion, which produced the calm of debility, not of reason, when, late in the course of the evening, Malfort appeared. She had sent for him on Sir Ralph’s departure, but he was then from home ; or, it is possible, the latter might have sought to communicate with him as well as her ladyship.

Malfort’s manner was restless and disturbed, and, when Lady Beaucaire began to unfold the anxieties preying on her mind, he interrupted her—

“Write to me about all this,” he said, “I have so much to do, so many different people’s affairs to attend to, that anything merely spoken might escape my memory.”

Lady Beaucaire felt that this reply might have been made with more propriety to any one rather than to her; who had a right, from many causes, to expect that *her* interests should, with Malfort, supersede all others. His request about writing was not new to her; nor, had she known all, confined to her. It was a plan by which he accumulated into his hands documents, that he might turn to various and extensive use. Among these he had models that supplied the deficiency of his own epistolary powers, the letters addressed to himself, with slight alterations, might be copied and addressed by him to others; or if the names were of note, they might be of use as autographs, and be brought forward to substantiate his alleged claims to distinction.

Lady Beaucaire had given free vent to her feelings before her son and husband ; but she stifled them in the presence of Malfort.

“ It must, I should think, demand a more than common memory,” she said, in as calm a voice as she could command, “ to attend to all with which you cumber yourself.”

“ O ! it is such a pleasure to me to serve everybody,” he replied.

“ So open as you are to universal attachments, I wonder you have any individual ones,” she observed ; “ and the failure or addition of any one in particular can be matter of small importance, since the passing stranger may supersede the oldest friend.”

“ And why not ?” said Malfort. “ This is quite one of your English notions. Old friends ! your country thinks so much of everything that is old—of anything that has cost time, care, trouble, or money. You rate everything by what it *costs* you, not by what it *is*.”

"And what, after the charm that has first won love, do you place before time and habit?" she said.

"Confidence—sympathy—kindness," he answered. "The lower animals are wiser than we, and I think it wise to imitate them. They meet and associate; they part, and form new associations; they value the present individual; they enjoy the present moment;—the greatest philosopher cannot be wiser than that, and very few are *so* wise."

"I never heard you declare so much of your opinions before," said she. "This declaration gives me a poor idea of your capability for deep and constant attachment."

"I beg your pardon—my affections increase with time," he cried.

"By multiplying their objects," she observed.

"You are jealous!" he exclaimed, in a tone slightly touched with exultation.

"I think your attentions to the American

with contempt, "you put me in mind of the crusading priests, whose vows did not allow them to hold a sword and shed blood, but it did not forbid their grasping a club, and bruising their victims to death !"

Malfort had no power of language—he could neither write nor speak ; probably he would, at that moment, have given worlds for a very common share of eloquence ; but had he possessed that which would have rivalled the great Grecian, a sudden and restless turn which he made on his chair, presented to him a sight that would have struck him dumb—Sir Ralph Beaucaire was standing in that room !—a spectator of that scene ! a witness to Malfort's perfidy, Lady Beaucaire's turpitude, and his own dishonour !

It was a moment that the painter should have seized, but could scarcely have realised. The fine form of Sir Ralph seemed to have dilated beyond its usual bulk, as Malfort's seemed suddenly shrunk from its common di-

mensions: the one held himself with a bearing of insupportable pride that added inches to his stature; the other crouched as if contraction had seized his frame. Sir Ralph looked like an avenging spirit breathing fire; Malfort, the wretch, scorched like a scroll, beneath his glance.

"Hence, and quit my sight!" said Sir Ralph, imperiously, pointing to a farther door; before he had power to add more, Malfort vanished.

"For *you*, madam," resumed the knight, "I shall write by the first post to Mr. Exmore—your nearest surviving relative, I believe—in order that he may remove you from the home you have disgraced.—"

Perhaps he might have added more, had not the spectral aspect of the paralyzed Lady Beaucaire deterred him. He rung the bell to summon an attendant to her aid, and left the room.

Sir Ralph had himself proceeded to the Falcon, to procure horses, and there, most unexpectedly, met Mezrack; all his worst fears had



been more than confirmed ; and after the interview, Sir Ralph returned hastily to the Park. With the sympathy of a common feeling he hastened to seek Lady Beaucaire, and was told that her ladyship was in her dressing-room ; not finding her there, he traversed the passage by which that apartment communicated with her boudoir, when, as he reached the door, he heard voices. It occurred to him that Marmion might be with his mother, and he hesitated whether he should risk meeting him then, or wait a calmer moment. That pause was fatal—words came to Sir Ralph's ear that arrested his attention and alarmed him, since he then discovered who were the speakers. He opened the door that was ajar, but the easy hinge and Persian carpet transmitted no sound that gave signal of his approach ; and, interested by the peculiar feeling of the moment, and secure of Sir Ralph's absence, neither Malfort nor Lady Beaucaire, it is probable, would have been easily alarmed.

After the discovery, in a state of mind that

bordered upon madness, Sir Ralph gained his closet which adjoined the library. He had, as he had entered the hall, met Forrester, whom he desired to bid his master be in the library in the course of an hour—that hour would expire soon, but would scarcely, Sir Ralph thought, find him fit for the interview. He rung the bell with the purpose of deferring it, and then flinging himself into a seat, sat with his hand clenched in his hair. A servant appeared—waited some time—at last ventured to speak : he was not heeded. Sir Ralph rose, opened the bosom of his waistcoat, as if he felt hurt by its pressure, walked down the room and returned. Starting, on perceiving the domestic, he fiercely demanded what he did there? Sir Ralph was reminded that his bell had rung.

“ Ah ! true—yes—I will see him—I will see him.”

“ Who, Sir ?” asked the man, not comprehending the words.

"My son," cried Sir Ralph; and then, as if the word grated on his ear, changed it for "Mr. Beaucaire."

"Yes," he continued, speaking aloud, even before the servant had left the room, "I will be calm, cool, and determined. This shall not move me—'tis not worthy that it should—'tis a blow that has struck my head, not my heart. I will cast her back upon the herd I raised her from—for him, the reptile! I will crush him as I would a toad. But O! this boy—that sticks to me—'tis of myself. How to act respecting him?"

Even this partial expression of the feeling with which his breast laboured gave him some relief. He continued to pace the library backward and forward for nearly half an hour, and he had assumed much of his usual self-command and composure by the time Marmion appeared.

"Sit down, sir," cried Sir Ralph. "This is

not likely to be a very short or a very agreeable conversation, and I cannot help hoping that you may be more fit for it than I am."

Marmion seated himself, evidently much agitated, but endeavouring to appear tranquil. There was a proud defiance in his aspect, that struggled to master his confusion; and this perhaps, as much as anything, assisted Sir Ralph to assume the calm dignity the occasion demanded.

"I have, sir," cried the knight, "many inquiries to make; I hope you will be able to satisfy them, and that you feel I have a right to make them."

"I am willing, sir, to bow in courtesy to your parental character; but, strictly speaking, the authority you exercise rests on my uncle's eccentric will. I have more than attained that age at which the law recognizes me as an independent party, and, whatever your charges may be, I am willing and, I trust, able to answer them."

“ Do not begin by playing the braggart, sir—’tis ill advised,” said Sir Ralph. “ I ought to expect little but what I meet, from the manner in which you were reared by a weak——unhappy woman,” he continued, checking the severity with which he was disposed to speak. “ But the excesses into which you have run, are as much beyond parallel, as palliation. You seemed to have held life a lottery, and to believe that the capricious goddess that presides over it would preserve for you all the prizes, since you have adventured so hazardously.”

Sir Ralph then entered into some of the business details, and Marmion was not a little astonished at the accurate information of his affairs that his father exhibited ; but he did not give himself time to comment on the circumstances, pressed as he was to make such defences and urge such excuses as he could think of.

“ Why,” exclaimed Sir Ralph, “ did I hear nothing of this in its progress—before it had reached this ruinous extent? Now may your

wretched mother behold the fruit of false indulgence!"

"And you, sir," rejoined the undaunted Marmion, "the fruit of unjust severity! Could I have regarded you as a friend—could I have hoped from you forgiveness, it is possible I might have made an early disclosure of what my folly had done for me. But, sir, I dreaded more from your anger, than I hoped from my mother's fondness. Now, sir, if you can—if you will—save me from utter ruin, and I promise that the future of my life shall be far other than the past. But if ruin must come, let it: I shall not be the first in the creation that lost one fortune *to* the world, and carved another *from* it."

Sir Ralph shook his head.

"It is easier for you to ask me to save you from ruin, than for me to effect it," he said, "as it is less difficult for you to talk of gaining a fortune than to make the acquisition. My affairs are, at this moment, poised so critically,

that ruin might befall me without retrieving you, were I to take up the burden of your responsibilities. Your uncle's fortune, too, I am sorry to say, is not what you and the world may imagine. I have strictly examined his affairs, and have had occasion to perceive how easily the savings of economy accumulated a fortune, and the leakage of extravagance destroys one. Formerly, when five per cent. interest was attainable, money doubled itself every fifteen years or so; then my uncle saved—his case, like the currency, has altered since then; of late years, instead of saving, he has been spending,—worse, wasting; and bankruptcy must be the issue."

"Then, sir," cried Marmion, jumping at once to his conclusion, and cutting the Gordian knot of his difficulties, "there is nothing for me but to fly my country; and to afford me [means to go, and something to go on with, a sale of this estate might be effected, if you and Malfort——"

"Wretch!" exclaimed Sir Ralph, maddened

by such a proposal ; for every rood of ground composing the estate was made sacred by the consecration of his earliest and happiest memories,—“ How can you recklessly contemplate such a sacrifice ? Do you remember who it was endowed you with this property ? ”

“ Sir,” cried Marmion, somewhat abashed, “ I do not forget it ; but *he* is dead, and *I* live ; and till the paralyzing load under which I suffer is lifted from my mind, I can retrieve nothing—I can do nothing.”

“ Have you *no* other resource ? ” asked Sir Ralph, sarcastically,—“ no noble and ennobling alliance—such as a Jew usurer’s daughter ? Pecuniary ruin was not, it seems, enough for you, but you must add personal degradation !—you that might have allied yourself——”

“ Sir, if there be any that will submit to an inquisition of their feelings, I am not one of them,” impatiently interrupted Marmion, colouring. “ But tell me, sir, to whom am I indebted for the officious zeal that has thus put



you in possession of my affairs. Show me the ' busy, meddling fiend : ' it must be some wretch that has eaten into my confidence, or kept watch upon my actions. Say," he added, fiercely and rapidly, " is it Malfort ?"

" No——your mother !"

The word had rushed forth beyond the power of recall ; but it was no sooner uttered than Sir Ralph wished it unsaid. Perhaps the dreadful fact he had just learned made him careless of denouncing her as an unworthy woman ; yet a moment after, as he marked the stern expression of Marmion's face, he felt it was not before her child he should cast her down.

" I must not hate *her*," muttered Marmion ; " but," he added aloud, " was my betrayal all her doing ?"

" Since the first woman," said Sir Ralph, " there never was one did evil, but some serpent was coiling in her bosom, tempting her weakness, availing himself of her ignorance."

" Sir," exclaimed Marmion, " there is a dark

meaning in your looks that tells me that your thoughts hold more than your tongue reveals ; if it relates to me, sir, give it forth—I am prepared for everything ; but, be assured of this, I shall not barter myself to serve a father's ambition——”

“ But you will to serve a Jew's,” interrupted Sir Ralph, kindled into fresh anger by Marmion's impetuosity. “ Go, sir, renounce the senate for the synagogue ; go, and get the usurer's money-bags, and pay your debts : cleave to his kindred, for you will be abjured by your own. I cast you off—I disown—I disinherit you ! You have yet to learn all that is hanging over this unhappy house. When once I lift the sacrificing arm, a voice from heaven should not arrest its purpose !”

“ None such will interpose for me,” said Marmion, rising, with a mixture of pride and humility. “ Naked I came to you, and naked I shall go away. You gave me protection ; you have resumed it—I bow to the decree. I ap-

proached you, sir, at the beginning of this meeting, as your son, willing to own and, if possible, to retrieve my errors, by submitting to any feasible plan you might propose. By your own renunciation, I stand now absolved, and I shall now do just as I please, just as I deem most expedient—an alien has no rights that he can claim, consequently no duties he need observe.”

Marmion bowed, turned, and left the room. Passing rapidly into the lobby, or passage, which, contrary to custom, was in darkness, he felt himself brush something; he turned to clutch it, under the idea that it was some one that had been listening; but it had either originally been a fancied contact, or the object, whatever it was, eluded him. Agitated and impatient, Marmion sought no farther, thought no more of it; but, quickening his step, gained his own chamber.

Forrester soon appeared; but Marmion made an impatient gesture with his hand, crying,

“ Go to bed ; I want nothing to night.”

“ Will you not undress, sir ?” asked the valet, looking with intense interest into his master’s face, on which the light of the lamp on the toilet fell strongly.

“ No—yes—I do not know——perhaps—at all events leave me. I want no attendance—no *watching*, sir. Do you hear me?—I would be alone.”

A thought glanced into Beaucaire’s mind, that it had probably been Forrester that had been lurking near the library-door ; but his thoughts were too much disturbed by more pressing and important matter to entertain the idea, and he dismissed it as he turned to the window, which he threw up, that he might admit the air to cool the fever that he felt. As he stood thus, his mind ran rapidly over the most prominent circumstances of his fate. He felt himself to be a bankrupt heir, a disinherited son, a perjured and a passionate lover, surrounded by foes, scarce conscious whom he might call

friends. He summed up this; and with the exaggerating power of his violent mind, spared no item that made the sum total of ruin. Strange as it may appear, he did not feel appalled; he felt pride—nay, even some pleasure in the conviction at which he had arrived.

How shall we mark the boundaries of spirit and matter? Say where the influence of one ends, and the other begins. How much or how little they mutually or severally depend on each other? In opposition to this amount of mental evil, Marmion was distinguished by much physical good. He had strength, such as he deemed might have strung the sinews of Samson when he carried off the gates of Gaza. He had personal advantages, such as few boasted; he had the most polished address, and the most elastic spirits. These subtracted much from his account of moral misery. But this strength, beauty, and animal spirit, to what might they trace the support that enabled them to *yield* support? Had abundant viands, a rich vintage, secure shelter,

and sufficient raiment not done their part? In truth the proudest might feel humbled, in reflecting how much they derived from these accessories; and when inclined to spurn the despised rabble, as mean in bearing, slow of perception, and unsightly of appearance, remember that the squalid couch, the empty srip, and ragged garb operates to extinguish the best attributes of the soul and body.

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## CHAPTER VI.

As Marmion stood at the window, he commanded a view of considerable extent, and, far in the distance, he fancied he descried Mad Maude, an old woman, of whom some slight mention has been made. Such was the mobility of his mind, so open to the impression of the moment, that she caught his attention, and he resolved to go and hold converse with her.

A large elm rose before the centre window of his room ; by means of this tree he had often, in his boyhood, made a secret exit from his apartment, and as unsuspected an entry. Availing himself now of its aid, he leaned from the window, made good his hold of a branch, stepped into the tree, and readily descended, till he might easily drop to the

ground. Crossing the sward, on which the dew lay glistening in the moonlight, he gained a part of the wall, which he scaled, sprang into the road, and running along it, found that which he had mistaken for Maude was a stray colt, which started out of his path as he approached. Pursuing his original fancy, he walked on till he stopped at Maude's cottage. A light gleamed through its latticed window, and he heard her muttering and moving about within. Confident of being somewhat of a favourite, and possessing the ability to adapt himself to her humour, he knocked three times, making a pause between each. Soon after the querulous voice of Maude demanded who was there?

"One of your majesty's loyal lieges," he replied.

Maude unbolted the door, and showing her face through the narrow aperture she made by holding it ajar, she asked him what he wanted?

"Counsel on affairs of state," he replied,



with mock solemnity. "Of whom may I seek it, if not of your majesty?"

The door opened, and Marmion stepped within the threshold; again the bolts were carefully replaced, as he took possession of a rude stool, and leaned his arm on the table near it, with the ease and familiarity of one accustomed to the place.

"What is this, Maude?" he asked, as he discovered his sleeve and wristband dabbled with blood. "There has been carnage here. Is it the life-blood of a rebel?"

"No," cried Maude, wiping down the table, "of a poor leveret I hae been a cooting oop."

"Some poacher's present," said Marmion, with a smile, "by which your majesty's favour has been propitiated. What think you of the poacher, Maude? Is he a rebel? You know he is hung or transported as such?"

The old woman scowled. Insane on the one point, that of believing herself an exiled

queen, on every other she exhibited a considerable share of shrewd and even superior sense. Many thought that her madness was more affected than real, since, in her mysterious profession of a fortune-teller, she was believed to practise so successfully on common credulity as to be amassing money. She professed to be a seventh daughter, and it was evident that she was a native of Scotland; this was enough with the common hinds to give her a right to the power of divination to which she pretended. She had been known in the neighbourhood of Rushmere for many years; so many, that the old were reconciled to her from habit, and the young, because she was associated with their earliest recollections. Often was Maude consulted as to the nature and combinations of those herbs and flowers, by which spells are worked, if not on the fate, at least on the fancy of the country maiden. The pea-pod, which, when hung over the door, makes the first bachelor that passed beneath it a husband to

the fair gatherer, was often brought from Maude's garden, or chosen under her direction, for she could tell whether the pod contained the mystic and necessary number of peas. On the first appearance of the new moon, after new year's day, young and chettry lips had repeated after her——

All hail to thee, moon ! all hail to thee !  
I prithee, good moon, reveal to me,  
This night, who may my husband be—

and the younger speaker then tripped home, secure that the dream of the night would reveal the future partner of her days.

“ What think you of the poacher, Maude ? ” repeated Beaucaire. “ Is he a rebel ? ”

“ A rebel ? Against whom ? Not against God or nature. The Maker says, ‘ kill and eat ; ’ and what the poacher snares, nature supplies. They be the rebels against bath God and nature, that course the poor panting thing till its wee heart be like to burst in its body—they ought to be hung or transported for a deadly sin—cruelty ! ”

"Fairly met, Maude," said Beaucaire; "a straighter answer than I ever before got from a Scotchwoman. You love Scotland, Maude?"

"D'ye ask that question of a Stuart?" she replied proudly. "Ah! 'tis a bonnie land, 'tis pity it should bear traitors; but an anointed head will reign there yet."

"Maude, Maude, here's something the matter with your stew!" he exclaimed, suddenly calling her attention to an overboiling pot, from the lifted lid of which came bubbling a savoury steam. "Allow me to be your majesty's clerk of the kitchen," he cried, amused by her sudden transition from her imaginary dignity to the anxiety she exhibited over her cookery.

"Ye shall be my guest; and an honoured and a welcome one," she cried, as she returned from the fire, threw a cloth over the table, placed a platter for Marmion and herself, and served up her savoury mess.

Beaucaire availed himself of her hospitality,

and ate heartily. He had experienced a long abstinence and great excitement, and the smell of food acted as a powerful stimulant to the hitherto unheeded calls of appetite; neither did he refuse to do justice to some whisky, which was afterwards placed before him, though its potency compelled him to qualify it with water.

So perfectly can a common sympathy unite the most dissimilar characters, that the college revel, or the courtly banquet, had never found Marmion more at home than he felt this night, companioned by Maude at her humble entertainment, in her lowly cottage.

“Now,” cried Marmion, as he tasted the liquor, “I can believe this a tribute to your majesty, either directly or indirectly, from the smuggler.” Then bowing to her with a smile of arch pleasantry, he added, “Here’s success to your majesty’s friends, and confusion to your enemies.”

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“An confusion to your’s, Marmion Beaucaire,” she cried, pledging him in return. “Ye hae mony as *hate* ye.”

“Have I any that *love* me?” he asked. “Come, royal Maude, speak to me of fate—of mine—tear open my breast, if ’twill assist you to read the tablets of my heart.”

“Ye hae a fiery ee, Marmion Beaucaire,” said the sibyl, “’tis bleezing noo—but though it be bright as the Sabbath sun, it looks on mair than it sees. Wi’ a’ your fauts, an ye hae mony, ye hae that ma’ win luv, an luv ye will nae easily lose agen.”

“Maude, I have heard too much of this kind of flattery—and yet it is not your fashion to flatter—’tis not your mood, nor have you motive for it—therefore, I am fain to believe you, my royal oracle. My heart thirsts for love—for the pure sweet love of one being—may my spirit drink it ere I die?”

“We maun a’ dee,” said Maude.

“Answer me not so wide,” he exclaimed

impetuously. "Maude—but never breathe the name with which I now embalm your dwelling—Magdalene—tell me of Magdalene!"

"Ah! she's a bonnie bird!" cried the old woman smiling placidly, as if the image presented to her fancy had power to harmonize even her disordered mind. "She's gay as the laverock, an sweet as the lintie! When I see her stepping alang, she minds me o' the lily wi' the bended head, an the fair face o' her. But when she speaks till ye, what a saft bloosh comes in her cheek, an hoo her bonnie mou' smiles, an her bright een look luvie on ye."

"By Heavens, woman!" vehemently exclaimed Beaucaire. "Those that say you are mad say false—or has her beauty wrought a miracle upon you? Maude," he continued, catching hold of her arm, "if it be given thee by incantation, devilish or divine, to know the secrets of the future—nay, but to guess at them—if you can read my date and destiny, do

it now, and tell me if the circle of my fate may compass her possession !”

Marmion was excited by what he had drank and, perhaps, previous agitation, together with the violence of his present feelings, contributed to increase the effect. He presented one of those striking, brilliant images that seem exclusively to belong to the scenes of romance, and which rarely embellish real life. The animated and expressive grace of his person, look, and attitude were the more striking, surrounded as he was by the sombre, dusky characteristics of poverty, which, like the effect of a dark background, threw him forth with the greater lustre. He was neighboured, too, by age, decrepitude, and deformity, and the eye that had been permitted to gaze on Marmion and Maude contrasted as they were, had imprinted on memory a picture that imagination never could have rivalled.

A loud knocking at the door alarmed, or rather disturbed them ; voices and the shuffling



of feet were heard, and Maude seemed at first inclined to make no answer ; but on the door being again assailed more clamorously, she arose.

“ Insolent rebels ! ” she exclaimed, “ what mean these clavers ? ”

“ Maude,” cried a voice, which Marmion recognized as Forrester’s, “ have you heard or seen anything of Mr. Beaucaire ? ”

“ And wha sent ye to speer that question at me ? ” she asked.

“ For heaven’s sake, Maude, answer me, answer quickly,” rejoined Forrester. “ Mr. Beaucaire is missing—Sir Ralph murdered——”

These words completely sobered Marmion. He wrenched the frail door from its hinges, and presenting himself before Forrester, and two other servants, his companions, exclaimed :—

“ What brutal jest is this—brought to scare this miserable crone ? Or are you mad as she is ? ”

“ Sir,” said Forrester, “ we come neither in

mirth nor madness. What you have heard is but too true; had I thought it would have reached your ear, I had been less abrupt in disclosing it——Sir Ralph was discovered this morning with his throat cut——.”

“But not dead!” said Marmion, gasping with horror.

“Yes, sir, quite dead—and had evidently been so some hours.”

Marmion stayed to hear no more. Lifting his eyes to heaven with that look which acknowledges how inexplicable are its decrees, yet owns how implicitly its creatures must bow to them, he strode on to the scene of calamity. One image only present to his mind—his father—first, as under the influence of anger and resentment they had last parted; again, under the arrest of the ghastly visitation beneath which he had fallen a violated corpse.

Forrester asked Maude for his master’s hat, but hearing that he had brought none, he hastened to pursue Beaucaire, who was utterly

unconscious that he was uncovered. The early morning was abroad in all its beauty ; all around that abode, so dark with crime and distress, looked lovely as paradise ere the birth of sin. But in the inner chambers lay the dead, and the guilty, mocked and upbraided by the splendour without. Nature, in her ceaseless vitality, in her green freshness and her thousand voices, spoke in vain to Marmion. Hope, fear, and love, that had all so lately woke the deep pulses of his heart, were not ; one dreadful consciousness that paralyzed his feelings and perceptions, carried him onward, till he stood in the presence of all that remained of what had once, like himself, been the shrine of " a host of passions."

The mansion and neighbourhood became increasingly a scene of horror and dismay. As the day advanced, magistrates, medical men, friends and acquaintances assembled, and the melancholy event became the universal theme. Every one had their conjectures, yet few expressed them ; but deep sympathy was evinced

for the widow and the heir, who were deemed fortunate in the possession of so active and efficient a friend as Malfort. He was seen everywhere, actively engaged in behalf of the deceased or the survivors; endeavouring to spare, as much as possible, the memory of the one, and the feelings of the other. None could be fitter for the task than the Professor. A general prepossession in his favour inclined people to adopt the view he desired them to take of the event; yet his suggestions were made with such anxiety not to offend the jealousy of self-love, that none felt his dictation. He whispered in confidence, (and who might doubt such authority?) that the deceased had laboured, for a considerable time, under the speculator's malady, the fear of pecuniary distress, and that probably the best solution of the mystery of his death was to be found in his affairs. Evil produces evil, and thus it is that sequent misfortunes so often occur. These friendly, confidential hints soon created general

alarm; and a run on the bank made the announcement that it had stopped payment coeval with the last adjournment of the inquest that met to examine into the affair of Sir Ralph's death.

Who that knows what the world is will doubt that the interest excited by the pounds, shillings, and pence, merged all that had been moved by suicide, sorrow, and shame? and that the expiring bank was thought much more of than the deceased banker, who was ultimately consigned to the grave under the odium of self-murder and insanity?

"So it appears," said Mr. Exmore, who had hastened to his widowed sister, "that Sir Ralph was really a ruined man! I had some notion that it was a falling house; and, thanks to circumspection, I am not involved in the ruin."

"It will be well if there be no deeper ruin," answered Coverley Peter Craven, who would have been heir-at-law had Marmion not been born. "Do you know there are not a few that

think, notwithstanding the verdict, that Sir Ralph did not fall by his own hand? and really the savage character and reckless profligacy of his son give warrant for the worst suspicions."

"Remember the old saying, 'Give a dog an ill name, and hang him,' " rejoined Exmore. "He is not as bad as that neither; and if it were possible, a commission of lunacy must be issued; and so give him leave to live and be as mad as he likes."

"We are told," replied the son of Mrs. Craven, "that 'pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall.' Half of these facts that proud house has realized; the other half may be accomplished yet. They seemed willing to sacrifice the world to that boy, and perhaps the world may yet sacrifice him."

"A just retribution," said Exmore; "at least a very natural reaction. It is the struggle against individual selfishness that makes all the strife existing. The spirit of resistance is the only shield against the encroachments continu-

ally attempted. How laughable it is to compare the doctrine preached from the pulpit, and the practice adopted out of it ! We have few examples of giving up the coat as well as the cloak, even among those that carry the cross on which the precept is inscribed."

" I am no reformer," replied Mr. Craven ; " I take the world as I find it, and, in the general scramble, think only of taking care of myself."

This conversation brought the parties to the Park, where Mr. Exmore was, for a time, taking up his abode. They inquired for Malfort, but were informed he was engaged. He *was* engaged, combating his own rage. In vain, since Sir Ralph's decease, he had sought an interview with Lady Beaucaire. After the funeral, he renewed the solicitations he had for a while suspended, and the result was a few lines from her ladyship, bidding him quit her house, averring that, did he not, she should quit it herself, since she was resolved the same roof should no longer shelter them. Malfort ground his

teeth with secret rage as he read this note ; tearing it into the minutest atoms, he leaned from the window and scattered the particles abroad upon the wind. !

" Thus shall I scatter the resolutions of a weak woman," he cried with a ghastly grin, that mingled contempt with rage.

Now sole executor of Mr. Coverley's will, and sole guardian of Marmion, Malfort had assumed that position that left Lady Beaucaire no alternative but to acquiesce in his power or to defy it. To dare the latter, she wanted the courage of innocence. " You cannot bring the actions of another to severe scrutiny, unless you have first been careful of your own duty." Besides, she was supine from habits of indolence, enervated by luxury, and timid from selfishness and conscious error. She felt some wish to atone for the past, yet more to revenge her injuries ; but she wanted the mind that would give vigour to the will. Thus Malfort succeeded in beating down her resolutions. He



gained a meeting, but it was a stormy one. The angry feelings of the weak and powerless vent themselves in words; the sterner mind indicates little—the one is like the thunder threatening in empty sound; the other like the electric fluid, which, though hid in the darkness of the cloud, penetrates with its destructive power without giving any preparation, and often without admitting repair.

Malfort listened to her ladyship's upbraiding with unmoved placidity, which only served to increase the violence of her feelings.

"Wretch!" she exclaimed, "I have no language strong enough to paint the abhorrence in which I hold you!"

"The sweetest wine makes the sourest vinegar," he replied, coolly.

"Pale, perjured villain!" she rejoined. "I not only view you with hatred, but with horror. Shall I tell you what has stolen on my mind? An instinctive, an unsought conviction, that you are——"

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“What?” asked Malfort, still preserving his smile, though a ghastliness stole over his face.

“The murderer of Sir Ralph Beaucaire!”

She rose as she spoke; the blood that rage had called into her face, fled away, and left her pale as death. Malfort looked at her in silence, without changing his position; he could not become paler, his very lip was livid; but his eye grew deadlier in its expression, and had that rapid movement from side to side that always attended agitation in Malfort. There was a time when the aspect he now wore would have appalled her; but she had worked up her feelings into temporary enthusiasm, and, for the time the stimulant lasted, their strength was all sufficient.

“I read,” she cried, after a fearful and expressive pause, “confession of your crime, even in *your* disingenuous face. I will denounce you, and so avenge my husband and myself. Stay,” she added, as a sudden thought crossed

Lady Beaucaire had given free vent to her feelings before her son and husband ; but she stifled them in the presence of Malfort.

" It must, I should think, demand a more than common memory," she said, in as calm a voice as she could command, " to attend to *all* with which you cumber yourself."

" O ! it is such a pleasure to me to serve everybody," he replied.

" So open as you are to universal attachments, I wonder you have any individual ones," she observed ; " and the failure or addition of any one in particular can be matter of small importance, since the passing stranger may supersede the oldest friend."

" And why not ?" said Malfort. " This is quite one of your English notions. Old friends ! your country thinks so much of everything that is old—of anything that has cost time, care, trouble, or money. You rate everything by what it *costs* you, not by what it *is*."

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"And what, after the charm that has first won love, do you place before time and habit?" she said.

"Confidence—sympathy—kindness," he answered. "The lower animals are wiser than we, and I think it wise to imitate them. They meet and associate; they part, and form new associations; they value the present individual; they enjoy the present moment;—the greatest philosopher cannot be wiser than that, and very few are *so* wise."

"I never heard you declare so much of your opinions before," said she. "This declaration gives me a poor idea of your capability for deep and constant attachment."

"I beg your pardon—my affections increase with time," he cried.

"By multiplying their objects," she observed.

"You are jealous!" he exclaimed, in a tone slightly touched with exultation.

"I think your attentions to the American

with contempt, "you put me in mind of the crusading priests, whose vows did not allow them to hold a sword and shed blood, but it did not forbid their grasping a club, and bruising their victims to death !"

Malfort had no power of language—he could neither write nor speak ; probably he would, at that moment, have given worlds for a very common share of eloquence ; but had he possessed that which would have rivalled the great Grecian, a sudden and restless turn which he made on his chair, presented to him a sight that would have struck him dumb—Sir Ralph Beaucaire was standing in that room !—a spectator of that scene ! a witness to Malfort's perfidy, Lady Beaucaire's turpitude, and his own dishonour !

It was a moment that the painter should have seized, but could scarcely have realized. The fine form of Sir Ralph seemed to have dilated beyond its usual bulk, as Malfort's seemed suddenly shrunk from its common di-

mensions: the one held himself with a bearing of insupportable pride that added inches to his stature; the other crouched as if contraction had seized his frame. Sir Ralph looked like an avenging spirit breathing fire; Malfort, the wretch, scorched like a scroll, beneath his glance.

"Hence, and quit my sight!" said Sir Ralph, imperiously, pointing to a farther door; before he had power to add more, Malfort vanished.

"For *you*, madam," resumed the knight, "I shall write by the first post to Mr. Exmore—your nearest surviving relative, I believe—in order that he may remove you from the home you have disgraced.—"

Perhaps he might have added more, had not the spectral aspect of the paralyzed Lady Beaucaire deterred him. He rung the bell to summon an attendant to her aid, and left the room.

Sir Ralph had himself proceeded to the Falcon, to procure horses, and there, most unexpectedly, met Mezrack; all his worst fears had

world ; and this, perhaps, though her vanity would never allow her to believe it, was the strongest detaining thread that held him to her. When every other was snapped—when love, liking, interest, had successively given way,—when hatred, loathing, disunion the most utter, had supervened, still he fancied, having achieved what he had, that this tie remained—that, regard him as she might, it could *not* be with contempt. The discovery that she did so—that she dared to tell him so, shook the sandy foundation of his pride, and the fabric fell ; but from amid the ruins stalked forth passions that had slumbered within, and unable to restore their shattered home, they crawled to assail its violator.

Had Lady Beaucaire any serious cause of fear, she acted with the grossest impolicy. She had struck that blow that can neither be recalled nor repaired ; neither forgiven nor forgot. They had before stood sufficiently divided ; but now a new chasm was rent, and a flood

not likely to be a very short or a very agreeable conversation, and I cannot help hoping that you may be more fit for it than I am."

Marmion seated himself, evidently much agitated, but endeavouring to appear tranquil. There was a proud defiance in his aspect, that struggled to master his confusion; and this perhaps, as much as anything, assisted Sir Ralph to assume the calm dignity the occasion demanded.

"I have, sir," cried the knight, "many inquiries to make; I hope you will be able to satisfy them, and that you feel I have a right to make them."

"I am willing, sir, to bow in courtesy to your parental character; but, strictly speaking, the authority you exercise rests on my uncle's eccentric will. I have more than attained that age at which the law recognizes me as an independent party, and, whatever your charges may be, I am willing and, I trust, able to answer them."



“ Do not begin by playing the braggart, sir—’tis ill advised,” said Sir Ralph. “ I ought to expect little but what I meet, from the manner in which you were reared by a weak——unhappy woman,” he continued, checking the severity with which he was disposed to speak. “ But the excesses into which you have run, are as much beyond parallel, as palliation. You seemed to have held life a lottery, and to believe that the capricious goddess that presides over it would preserve for you all the prizes, since you have adventured so hazardously.”

Sir Ralph then entered into some of the business details, and Marmion was not a little astonished at the accurate information of his affairs that his father exhibited ; but he did not give himself time to comment on the circumstances, pressed as he was to make such defences and urge such excuses as he could think of.

“ Why,” exclaimed Sir Ralph, “ did I hear nothing of this in its progress—before it had reached this ruinous extent? Now may your

wretched mother behold the fruit of false indulgence !”

“ And you, sir,” rejoined the undaunted Marmion, “ the fruit of unjust severity ! Could I have regarded you as a friend—could I have hoped from you forgiveness, it is possible I might have made an early disclosure of what my folly had done for me. But, sir, I dreaded more from your anger, than I hoped from my mother’s fondness. Now, sir, if you can—if you will—save me from utter ruin, and I promise that the future of my life shall be far other than the past. But if ruin must come, let it : I shall not be the first in the creation that lost one fortune *to* the world, and carved another *from* it.”

Sir Ralph shook his head.

“ It is easier for you to ask me to save you from ruin, than for me to effect it,” he said, “ as it is less difficult for you to talk of gaining a fortune than to make the acquisition. My affairs are, at this moment, poised so critically,

that ruin might befall me without retrieving you, were I to take up the burden of your responsibilities. Your uncle's fortune, too, I am sorry to say, is not what you and the world may imagine. I have strictly examined his affairs, and have had occasion to perceive how easily the savings of economy accumulated a fortune, and the leakage of extravagance destroys one. Formerly, when five per cent. interest was attainable, money doubled itself every fifteen years or so ; then my uncle saved—his case, like the currency, has altered since then ; of late years, instead of saving, he has been spending,—worse, wasting ; and bankruptcy must be the issue."

" Then, sir," cried Marmion, jumping at once to his conclusion, and cutting the Gordian knot of his difficulties, " there is nothing for me but to fly my country ; and to afford me [means to go, and something to go on with, a sale of this estate might be effected, if you and Malfort——"

" Wretch !" exclaimed Sir Ralph, maddened

by such a proposal; for every rood of ground composing the estate was made sacred by the consecration of his earliest and happiest memories,—“How can you recklessly contemplate such a sacrifice? Do you remember who it was endowed you with this property?”

“Sir,” cried Marmion, somewhat abashed, “I do not forget it; but *he* is dead, and *I* live; and till the paralyzing load under which I suffer is lifted from my mind, I can retrieve nothing—I can do nothing.”

“Have you *no* other resource?” asked Sir Ralph, sarcastically,—“no noble and ennobling alliance—such as a Jew usurer’s daughter? Pecuniary ruin was not, it seems, enough for you, but you must add personal degradation!—you that might have allied yourself——”

“Sir, if there be any that will submit to an inquisition of their feelings, I am not one of them,” impatiently interrupted Marmion, colouring. “But tell me, sir, to whom am I indebted for the officious zeal that has thus put

you in possession of my affairs. Show me the 'busy, meddling fiend:' it must be some wretch that has eaten into my confidence, or kept watch upon my actions. Say," he added, *fiercely and rapidly*, "is it Malfort?"

"No——your mother!"

The word had rushed forth beyond the power of recall; but it was no sooner uttered than Sir Ralph wished it unsaid. Perhaps the dreadful fact he had just learned made him careless of denouncing her as an unworthy woman; yet a moment after, as he marked the stern expression of Marmion's face, he felt it was not before her child he should cast her down.

"I must not hate *her*," muttered Marmion; "but," he added aloud, "was my betrayal all her doing?"

"Since the first woman," said Sir Ralph, "there never was one did evil, but some serpent was coiling in her bosom, tempting her weakness, availing himself of her ignorance."

"Sir," exclaimed Marmion, "there is a dark

meaning in your looks that tells me that your thoughts hold more than your tongue reveals ; if it relates to me, sir, give it forth—I am prepared for everything ; but, be assured of this, I shall not barter myself to serve a father's ambition——”

“But you will to serve a Jew's,” interrupted Sir Ralph, kindled into fresh anger by Marmion's impetuosity. “Go, sir, renounce the senate for the synagogue ; go, and get the usurer's money-bags, and pay your debts : cleave to his kindred, for you will be abjured by your own. I cast you off—I disown—I disinherit you ! You have yet to learn all that is hanging over this unhappy house. When once I lift the sacrificing arm, a voice from heaven should not arrest its purpose !”

“None such will interpose for me,” said Marmion, rising, with a mixture of pride and humility. “Naked I came to you, and naked I shall go away. You gave me protection ; you have resumed it—I bow to the decree. I ap-

proached you, sir, at the beginning of this meeting, as your son, willing to own and, if possible, to retrieve my errors, by submitting to any feasible plan you might propose. By your own renunciation, I stand now absolved, and I shall now do just as I please, just as I deem most expedient—an alien has no rights that he can claim, consequently no duties he need observe.”

Marmion bowed, turned, and left the room. Passing rapidly into the lobby, or passage, which, contrary to custom, was in darkness, he felt himself brush something; he turned to clutch it, under the idea that it was some one that had been listening; but it had either originally been a fancied contact, or the object, whatever it was, eluded him. Agitated and impatient, Marmion sought no farther, thought no more of it; but, quickening his step, gained his own chamber.

Forrester soon appeared; but Marmion made an impatient gesture with his hand, crying,

“ Go to bed ; I want nothing to night.”

“ Will you not undress, sir ?” asked the valet, looking with intense interest into his master’s face, on which the light of the lamp on the toilet fell strongly.

“ No—yes—I do not know——perhaps—at all events leave me. I want no attendance—no *watching*, sir. Do you hear me?—I would be alone.”

A thought glanced into Beaucaire’s mind, that it had probably been Forrester that had been lurking near the library-door ; but his thoughts were too much disturbed by more pressing and important matter to entertain the idea, and he dismissed it as he turned to the window, which he threw up, that he might admit the air to cool the fever that he felt. As he stood thus, his mind ran rapidly over the most prominent circumstances of his fate. He felt himself to be a bankrupt heir, a disinherited son, a perjured and a passionate lover, surrounded by foes, scarce conscious whom he might call



if the penitent be the most accepted of Heaven, who is there on earth would refuse you the wish, the hope that you may become reconciled to yourself, by abjuring the errors that make you war *even* with yourself? Yes, yes, I am *sure* you will retrieve all."

"This is new life to me," he cried, clasping his hands; "this shall arm me against future error: but may I hope the dearest of all rewards?—Magdalene;" he continued in a softened tone—

" ' Is there to latitude eternity  
A hope for' ———

Marmion?"

The expressive language of his eyes was eloquent in its pleading, and guarded as Magdalene was by delicacy, and some doubts, she might have been drawn to confess the growing preference she felt, had not the bounding steps of the young Trevors announced their approach, and interrupted the interview. There is a truth in an innocent heart, which, though it

and sufficient raiment not done their part? In truth the proudest might feel humbled, in reflecting how much they derived from these accessories; and when inclined to spurn the despised rabble, as mean in bearing, slow of perception, and unsightly of appearance, remember that the squalid couch, the empty scrip, and ragged garb operates to extinguish the best attributes of the soul and body.

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## CHAPTER VI.

As Marmion stood at the window, he commanded a view of considerable extent, and, far in the distance, he fancied he descried **Mad Maude**, an old woman, of whom some slight mention has been made. Such was the mobility of his mind, so open to the impression of the moment, that she caught his attention, and he resolved to go and hold converse with her.

A large elm rose before the centre window of his room ; by means of this tree he had often, in his boyhood, made a secret exit from his apartment, and as unsuspected an entry. Availing himself now of its aid, he leaned from the window, made good his hold of a branch, stepped into the tree, and readily descended, till he might easily drop to the

ground. Crossing the sward, on which the dew lay glistening in the moonlight, he gained a part of the wall, which he scaled, sprang into the road, and running along it, found that which he had mistaken for Maude was a stray colt, which started out of his path as he approached. Pursuing his original fancy, he walked on till he stopped at Maude's cottage. A light gleamed through its latticed window, and he heard her muttering and moving about within. Confident of being somewhat of a favourite, and possessing the ability to adapt himself to her humour, he knocked three times, making a pause between each. Soon after the querulous voice of Maude demanded who was there?

"One of your majesty's loyal lieges," he replied.

Maude unbolted the door, and showing her face through the narrow aperture she made by holding it ajar, she asked him what he wanted?

"Counsel on affairs of state," he replied,

the certainty of their realization. The drawbacks existing to his ideal happiness were the apprehensive reserve of Magdalene, and the unsuspecting confidence of Esther. He wanted the patience necessary to win the one, and the hardihood to undeceive the other. In every interview Magdalene seemed to say, "I would I might trust you:" in every letter, Esther avowed he was all her trust on earth. From despair on this hand, and distress on that, Marmion often sought relief by inquiring after Malfort's progress in matters of business, and in signing, often without reading, the papers to which his signature was necessary. He heard with pleasure that the sale of the Park was effected, but so careless of pecuniary matters was Marmion, that he actually set out for London, in order to accompany Lady Beaucaire to Mr. Exmore's residence, without ascertaining what price the estate had brought. Some little excuse might be found for this disregard of pecuniary matters, in the infinite amusement he

“ Fairly met, Maude,” said Beaucaire ; “ a straighter answer than I ever before got from a Scotchwoman. You love Scotland, Maude ? ”

“ D’ye ask that question of a Stuart ? ” she replied proudly. “ Ah ! ’tis a bonnie land, ’tis pity it should bear traitors ; but an anointed head will reign there yet.”

“ Maude, Maude, here’s something the matter with your stew ! ” he exclaimed, suddenly calling her attention to an overboiling pot, from the lifted lid of which came bubbling a savoury steam. “ Allow me to be your majesty’s clerk of the kitchen,” he cried, amused by her sudden transition from her imaginary dignity to the anxiety she exhibited over her cookery.

“ Ye shall be my guest ; and an honoured and a welcome one,” she cried, as she returned from the fire, threw a cloth over the table, placed a platter for Marmion and herself, and served up her savoury mess.

Beaucaire availed himself of her hospitality,

ing only to a momentary infatuation ; that he could, as he designed, say, " Thus far will I go and no farther."

How long he might have continued in this delirium it is not easy to determine, had it not ended in his arrest, followed by his surrender to the King's Bench prison, and the immediate lodgment of detainers, that left small hope of his enlargement. Sobered by this event, rather than distressed by it, he now first thought of writing to Malfort. His letters were unanswered : he wrote again in peremptory anger, and, at the same time, to others, for explanation ; replies from the latter came by return of post, and contained the astounding intelligence that Malfort had absconded, carrying off the whole of the money he had realized.

The first emotion to which Marmion yielded on receiving this communication, was a violent burst of laughter.

" What !" he exclaimed, " will the whole tribe of the canting disciples of sentiment and

sociality, by whom he was deified, say now !—the infernal hypocrite has out-canted them all, and applied the doctrine of sympathy, as they no doubt all desire to do, to the end of thorough-paced selfishness.”

But when this burst was over, which his sensibility to ridicule could not resist, he felt the full effects of a blow, stunning as it was unexpected. He was now completely a beggar, and hopelessly a prisoner; cut off from the power of retrieving his fortune—of escaping his doom. On his first imprisonment Marmion had felt none of that annoyance of which a more reflective mind had been susceptible; in fact, the event was not wholly without pleasure, because it was new—it was not of that class of pleasures that creates a sensation of enjoyment, but it was a negative satisfaction resulting from feeling himself the sole and conspicuous actor in a novel situation. Perhaps all self-reference, save in the case of remorse, is attended with some pleasure. What is the source of all com-



plaint and lamentation—all the egotism of distress? The pleasure we feel in contemplating ourselves under wrong and suffering. It is not hazarding too much to say that many derive more positive enjoyment from talking of their affliction, than absolute pain in their endurance ; though this becomes the less true the more we approach the great calamities ; for as the waters run deeper, they emit the less sound.

At no time was Marmion of the class of murmurers, and least so now, when he had most cause. Seeking neither communion nor consolation, he either kept to his room, or walked about in gloomy meditation ; indulging those vindictive feelings and severe thoughts, through which he was apt to judge the mass of mankind too contemptuously, and himself too complacently.

It was now that Beaucaire discovered his friends. Of all those that had expressed such exuberant delight at meeting him again in the circles of dissipation, not one came to gladden

him now that he was confined to the four walls of a prison ; while many erected themselves into wits and moralists at his expense. Dowagers and damsels, that once extolled him as the finest young man of the age, now discovered he was the shockingest creature in existence ; his hangers-on walked off, and he well nigh felt himself deserted, when a packet of letters redeemed mankind from his malediction.

The first he opened contained an inclosure of a ten pound note ; as he was not acquainted with the hand, the first thing he did was to consult the signature. He perceived the letter came from Ellen and her mother : it simply stated that they were in comparative prosperity ; a small and unexpected patrimony having fallen to Mrs. Melburn, and Ellen's situation having opened to her good friends an ample recompense. They entreated him to permit them to prove their gratitude by the inclosed loan, to assure him that while they lived he should never want the prayer of the widow and the orphan ;

and as *his* charity had been blessed to them, they trusted *their* gratitude might be of some trifling avail to him.

Marmion laid down the letter and burst into tears. This solitary act of charity—how was it being remembered in his distress, and repaid to him tenfold in his need !

“ No, Ellen,” he cried, “ I am not utterly destitute, and if I were, it is not your little hoard I would diminish ; you shall add it, and with increase, to the fund that will, I trust, crown your mother’s old age with comfort, and your own after her. Would to heaven all were, like you, worthy to receive aid, and as willing to return it ; and that I could look back at all the moments of my past life with the same satisfaction I do at those I passed with you.”

The next letter he took up was from Mr. Trevor, offering him aid, but sending him none. The next was from Mrs. Trevor, containing five pounds, delicately reminding him she was more than that in his debt, and cheering him with the

news that they should speedily be in town, and that they should then meet and spend some social hours together. A postscript, in the handwriting of Magdalene, assured him that he was remembered, and sorrowed for.

The change these communications wrought on the feelings of Beaucaire were too powerful to admit of inaction; thrusting the letters into his bosom, he sallied forth to the parade, which he traversed with a measured pace, and insensible, for a time, to any of the surrounding objects. The paroxysm of his fury against Malfort had, in its reaction, sunk into a sort of moody rage; the disgust he felt at the littleness that characterised society, into misanthropic abhorrence of his kind; when the beams of gratitude, friendship, and affection had come and played upon his heart, and its young fountains answered to the welcome light, doubly welcome from the dense character of the gloom they scattered. As all Beaucaire's feelings subsided, when their violence was exhausted, into the stillest calm, it

was then that he was most susceptible to current impressions and passing objects; and thus it was that, as his present excitement faded, he began to perceive himself watched by a man, that continually passed and repassed him. He in turn scrutinized this scrutinizer. Marmion was sufficiently well read in life to discern in the countenance, dress, and bearing of this man, the debauched, disappointed adventurer—one long acquainted with the world, and the worse for its acquaintance. The odds, as in all such cases, had been against him; and while society was nothing the worse for his craft and cunning, he was all the worse for it himself. It is the result in everything that must decide, and there never was a balance of happiness, though there may sometimes be of prosperity, in favour of the unprincipled—the pure ore can alone stand the crucible—the *caput mortuum* of vice must be misery; the residue of virtue, happiness, if not as unalloyed as might be, at least unpoisoned by that self abhorrence that cleaves to

the wicked, as the infected shirt did to Hercules.

"You appear to know me," at length cried Marmion, stopping short, and looking intently at the stranger. "Have you anything to say to me?"

"More, sir, than you might like to hear," was the reply. "As to knowing you, perhaps few know you so well."

"Indeed!" said Marmion, "then it is but fair I should in return have the advantage of knowing something of you. What is your name?"

"Call me Smith," replied the stranger, with a smile and a bow that had not disgraced a drawing-room.

Marmion felt himself singularly interested: there was an intelligence and gracefulness, associated with a wan dejection, that redeemed the more repulsive points in this man's aspect. Beaucaire's paramount principle of action was to gratify the prevailing inclination, at the ex-

pense of either expediency or propriety : therefore, frankly telling Smith that he had excited his curiosity, and must satisfy it, he invited him to accompany him to his room.

Marmion had already learned to dispense with a servant ; he placed, with his own hands, a decanter of wine and glasses on the table, and assumed the easy manner of intimacy on the instant. He had dined himself, he, therefore, never thought of asking his guest if he had. When our own wants are supplied, the probability that another may want rarely occurs to us ; but there sat in Beaucaire's presence at that moment, one long acquainted with such deep distress, that even famine, at times, fastened on his vitals.

Smith, in obedience to Marmion's desire, filled his glass, but his hand trembled, as if unequal to the weight of the decanter ; his hollow cheek flushed, and grew pale again ; he lifted the glass, and put it down untouched ; he looked at the fire, and then at the window ; he

seemed to desire to say something, yet knew not how to give it utterance—a tear even started in his eye, and he bit his lip in an endeavour to repress it.

Marmion had quick and kind sympathies; he saw Smith's distress, and was touched by it; with that genial cordiality of manner, which is as rare as gracefulness, and to which his fine voice gave additional effect, he said,—

“ You are unhappy—drink, and drive away the demon thoughts that are besetting you; and, though it be somewhat premature to say as much, believe me, if I can do anything to relieve your present sufferings, I will most gladly.”

“ Sir,” cried Smith, grasping, under the effects of agitation, the edge of the table on which he leaned, “ I have seen a great deal of life, and my feelings are no longer of the finest order; but there are things that the most callous cannot bear. I have borne much—I have deserved much, but scarcely, I think, to want



food, and to be obliged to confess it. In my present state of inanition I do not dare to touch this wine."

Beaucaire was struck to the heart; his feelings had often been probed before, but never as at that moment. He rose, went to his closet, and brought out its contents, saying, with such composure as he could command, that he would order something better immediately.

"This will do, sir, this will do," said Smith, "it must be coarse bread that *I* cannot eat."

Marmion rushed from the room, as much to hide his emotion, as to order a more acceptable meal for the unfortunate, and then walking up and down the lobby, forbore to return again, unwilling to witness or increase the distress of the famished man over his regale.

It is when acted on by these powerful appeals that men, like Marmion, think. The accusing spirit within his breast now spoke aloud, and reminded him of wanton waste and

vile extravagance, while present pity pointed to the inmate of his room, perhaps as worthy to join the feast of plenty as himself, feeding with the ravening eagerness of a wolf. He held himself at that moment the plunderer of the poor, and felt his fate as a just punishment for the impunity with which he had so long sinned.

Want is the most appalling of human evils, the one that awakens the most painful and most universal sympathy. The sufferer and the soother alike turn from the attempt to show, or to examine into the detail of this calamity—the anatomy of this ghastly evil. Why is this? Because it shows proud humanity what it is—what are its dependencies—its contingencies. The thew and sinew, the bone and muscle, the stature and the bearing of the finely organised frame — where, when want assails, is the strength, the symmetry, of which the spirit is so vain? If reflection was cultivated, could pride be known? Let the most distinguished

assign his merits, in their several proportions, to the sources from whence he draws them, and what particle would be left of which he could say—"This is of myself?"

"I am inclined to think," said Smith, when again seated in familiar conversation with Beaucaire, "that the natures originally the most sensitive and sympathetic become the greatest rogues, if subjected to the contact of the world and the alembic of distress. I judge from myself—I went into life with a heart and a hand open to all—I found all ready to appeal to my sympathy, and accept of my assistance; but when my time of distress came, what was my experience? I found every heart, every hand closed against me. What was the consequence? Stung by ingratitude, and detesting the hypocrisy everywhere prevailing, I took by violence, what would not otherwise have been yielded; but I soon found I thus gave society the means of making unjust reprisals. I grew crafty; renouncing force, I adopted fraud, and solaced

myself in thinking that I had only taken that by stratagem, which had been gained by legal robbery ; only scattered to appease my own and my confederates' necessities, what breadless infamy might have sued for in vain ! I have tested society by practical experience, and the power of a strong mind. I have seen that any may be vile with impunity, that can obtain the warranty of the laws and customs that have been framed on purpose to sanction fraud, and shelter the defrauder, and that he is the honestest man that acts without them."

" I am not likely to become a convert to your argument," said Marmion, " having recently suffered most seriously by one of your so-called honest men."

" I know him," said Smith.

" Who ?" asked Beaucaire.

" Malfort," rejoined Smith. " I have known him these five-and-twenty years, and he verifies my assertion. He is what the education of the world, into which he was thrown very young,

has made him. He was the confederate of two, I may say three others, all older and more book-taught than himself, but he has topped them all in ingenuity and success—all, save one poltroon; but then *he* has a diploma from the College of Surgeons to ensure *him* shelter and success."

"As I had the honour of knowing this one distinguished deceiver," said Marmion, bitterly, "perhaps I may be unconsciously acquainted with some of his accomplices."

"You are," said Smith.

"Who are they?" asked Beaucaire.

"One sits before you; the other you know well, but he will not now seek to know much of you—Exmore."

"What, my mother's brother do you mean?" interrogated Marmion.

"He is the brother of Lady Beaucaire," said Smith.

"And who is the fourth?" inquired Beaucaire.

"An utter stranger to you," he replied, "therefore 'tis needless to inform you."

"It appears to me," rejoined Marmion, mastering his surprise, "that fortune has dealt unjustly; and you, that have been, as I can readily believe, the most deserving, perhaps, I should rather say, the least undeserving, have been the least fortunate."

"Let me say little of my deserts," replied Smith. "Perhaps, strictly speaking, there is no wrong defensible, because, though aimed at the infamous, it may reach the innocent. Connected as is the whole machinery of society—wheel within wheel—there is no telling on what part an infliction may ultimately settle; but the possibility of having thus hurt the innocent is remote and uncertain, and it may be shaken, from the mind. Not so when the blow has been direct; when you have struck the pleading unoffending victim down; violated her best feelings, blighted her best hopes, destroyed her dearest affections. I did all this, and great

as have been my sufferings, great as they yet may be, I feel my guilt has merited more than fate can ever inflict."

Smith became painfully agitated, his countenance changed many times, and Marmion observed, with alarm, that his utterance was affected ; he attempted to speak, but was, at first, inarticulate, and then wholly unintelligible. Beaucaire hastened for assistance, a medical man was soon beside the sufferer, who, having been bled, was placed on Marmion's bed for the night. His indisposition was pronounced to have arisen from the effects of a full meal, after great and protracted abstinence, together with violent agitation of the feelings.

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## CHAPTER VIII.

It was now that Marmion exercised one of his redeeming virtues. He sacrificed his rest, his time, to the unfortunate Smith, in his attentions to whom he felt an indefinable pleasure; probably arising from the evident pleasure with which his kindness was received.

"You will remember this when I am ashes," said the sick man, "and it shall warm your heart. The mould that will soon press me will be the foundation to you of a self-satisfaction that I would give worlds to feel but for one moment."

Smith had passed many sleepless nights, and soon after he had thus spoken he sunk into repose. Beaucaire closed the curtains, and placing the tall screen so as to obscure the light and conceal the bed, he sat down by the fireside with a



book ; but he had scarcely turned the first page when he was pleasingly interrupted by a visit from Mrs. Trevor and Hagar. He held up his finger, and addressed them in a low voice ; but his countenance spoke the delight with which he beheld them. They were soon in a circle round the hearth, Marmion narrating and Agnes and Hagar weeping over the sufferings of the unfortunate Smith, whose breathing told them that they gave him no disturbance.

“ How kind you are,” exclaimed Marmion, addressing Mrs. Trevor, when his tale of woe was ended, “ how kind you are, to come to this unaccustomed place. My mother has not yet gathered courage enough to visit me.”

“ Do not abuse terms, my dear Marmion,” said Agnes, with her usual warmth. “ The cowardice of which women are so vain, that they fancy appears so pretty and interesting, is coldness, or worse. Was there ever that prison built that should keep me an hour from my Arthur?—no, though the moat that circled it

flowed with liquid fire. You will be pleased, I think, to hear that I have letters from him, telling, with a modest satisfaction, of the triumphs he has achieved, and the friends he has won."

"While *I*," cried Marmion, feeling the heart-burnings of rivalry recur, "am covered with disgrace and surrounded by enemies."

"I did not name the happiness and reputation of Arthur," said his mother, hastily, "to create any such contrast. You may retrieve all; and, if wishes and prayers might secure you better fortune, how soon! But, Marmion, remember what he, with whom you are better acquainted than I am, has said,—'He that will not exert his own strength, cannot apply for aid to his friends or the Gods.' Arthur——"

"Tell me of Magdalene, of Miss Melburn," interrupted Marmion, impatient of the name of one whose superiority he could not pardon.

Mrs. Trevor, checked upon her dearest theme, felt hurt, and did not immediately reply ;

but Hagar told him that Magdalene was passing a short time with the aged Mrs. Melburn, and that she had not yet recovered the severe shock of the events of the last summer. Mrs. Trevor employed herself in turning over the pages of the book Marmion had laid down ; and thus allowed him to converse with Hagar, which he did for some continuance, and when their conference ended, Agnes discovered that Hagar, who was, in principle and practice, a disciple of charity, purposed remaining to minister to the sick man.

“ But how will you go home alone ? ” asked Marmion of Agnes, apprehensively ; “ as you say you walked hither, and I can only attend you to the gate.”

“ My dear Marmion,” she cried, with a smile, to which all her usual kindness was restored, “ the command of a carriage does not make me a mummy, incapable of walking, and of walking alone too. What do women fear ?—this is no longer the age of brute force ; and have we not

the knight-errantry of the police? You are one of those men that admire and encourage the cultivation of female helplessness, or rather weakness; but you and they only like it when it appears as a foil to your own strength, acts as the immediate tool of your will or your vanity; when it *reacts* upon you, as it must do, in the faults and follies of sisters, wives, mothers, and daughters, you detest it. Weakness, mental or bodily, is no auxiliary in the business of life. It is very well to have the aid of man, but very ill to need it, since in every relation he is most ready to help those best capable of helping themselves. I am not one to increase my disabilities by a voluntary surrender of my capabilities. I can parody the words of Fenelon: I am more a woman than a Mrs. Trevor, and more a human being than a woman."

Marmion was not displeased when Agnes rose to depart, for he calculated, with a lover's fondness, on how much, when alone with Hagar, he should hear of Magdalene, who was the

child of the gentle Israelite's affections ; but this desire was not destined to be gratified. Beaucaire had attended his friend to the gate, and was bidding her farewell, when he was accosted by Mezrack, who had just entered.

Marmion hesitated whether to receive him with hostility or otherwise, as the consciousness of the change that had taken place in their relative position crossed his mind. He remembered, too, the familiarity, if not insolence, with which he had often allowed himself to treat the old man ; and instead of feeling shame that he had ever adopted such a mode of conduct, he felt shame now to adopt the contrary, lest it might be thought that affliction had humbled him. But there was an expression in the dark visage of the Jew that appealed to the better part of Beaucaire's nature ; instead of exultation and disdain, there was, as of old, humility, and, superadded to it, kindness. Marmion could defy wrath, dash himself to pieces against the stubbornness of pride, or the insolence of

rivalry ; but the extended hand, with the open palm of frankness or good nature, always received from his the grasp of cordiality.

“ Mr. Beaucaire,” said Mezrack, “ I have come to see you, if it will not be intruding.”

Marmion felt the generous humility, and the kind consideration that spoke in the tone, looks, and words of his aged visitor : offering his arm to the old man, they walked some paces before he spoke.

“ If you have anything to say to me of a private nature,” said the latter, “ it must be here ; for I have people in my room that I cannot send away.”

“ Well, then, I must go in and rest first,” said Mezrack, “ for this has been a long walk for my years, and I feel it.”

A smile curled Beaucaire's lip as he perceived how much more penurious of his money, than of his strength, Mezrack was ; but it would have relinquished some of its contempt, could he have known that the money Mezrack

devoted to unostentatious charity would have furnished for him a gilded chariot, richer than extravagance ever adopted, or ingratitude ever drove; and that Mezrack trod that path that few chariots ever trace.

As Beaucaire reached his room door he was accosted by a person who put a note into his hand. The Jew, finding Marmion's attention engrossed, laid his hand on the lock, saying,—

“ I shall go in.”

“ Do,” cried Marmion, “ I will join you presently.”

With this permission Mezrack softly opened the door, and entered the room. Hagar's back was towards him, and from the coloured handkerchief that habitually bound her head, he readily judged she was a foreign woman, as from the rich shawl that she gracefully wore, he concluded her not to be a poor, or at least a very economical one. Had Beaucaire been at his elbow, a look of less kindness than that with which they had met would have glanced

towards him. Shaking his head, Mezrack advanced into the middle of the room, prepared to scrutinize rather than to greet the suspicious lady, who was no sooner sensible of his presence than she rose and left the arm-chair in which she had been seated. She saw at first nothing more than that he was an aged man of her own people ; but this was enough to awaken feelings of respect and interest.

He had walked to the window, perhaps to combat the emotion that had seized him : for when we come with a good purpose we are not easily reconciled to that which appears to thwart it.

“ Foolish Nazarene !” he muttered, “ ‘ unstable as water, thou shalt not excel ;’ and companioned by the wicked thou shalt not reform.”

“ God of Jacob !” exclaimed Hagar, holding by the chair from which she had risen. At those words Mezrack turned ; for many moments there was the stillness of death in that chamber, then a movement of rapid steps, and



Hagar fell voiceless at Mezrack's feet, which she kissed in the deep humility of her prostration.

“ Ruth ! if it be that thou art my child—that I live and behold her—look up and speak ! ”

“ Ruth—yes, Ruth ; but never worthy of being a child of thine,” cried the Jewess.

“ Save me,” exclaimed Mezrack—“ the light leaves my eyes. Lord, let me not die ere I have blessed her ! ”

The old man struggled against the weakness of emotion, and she (whom we have hitherto called Hagar, but must now call Ruth), summoned her fortitude for his sake. She found wine, which she brought to him. Lifting his hand ere he drank of it, he cried :—

“ ‘ God is my salvation ; I will trust and not be afraid.’ ” He put to his pale lips the wine : when he had swallowed it, and resigned the glass, he clasped his hands together, and bowing his head upon them, exclaimed :—

“ ‘Blessed art thou, O Lord ! the healer of all creatures, and wonderful in thy doings.’ O, Ruth !” he resumed, looking up and beholding her on her knees before him ; “ when I named thee, as is my wont, in my prayers, at the rising of the morning pillar, did I deem that its light came to lead thee unto my arms ? I said, as did Jacob, ‘ bereaved of my children, I *am* bereaved.’ Thou wert taken from me, as was Benjamin from Israel ;—thou alone ‘ left of thy mother, and whom thy father loved.’ And now, like unto Israel’s, is *my* spirit revived, for ‘ I have seen thy face—because thou art yet alive.’ ”

Ruth wept profusely, and she recovered composure the sooner. Perhaps, severely schooled as her mind had been, no lighter cause than the meeting her father could have moved her to the least visible emotion.

“ Ruth,” cried the old man, after a silence, in which each had gazed on the other, without speaking, noting perhaps the changes that time

had wrought in the lineaments of either :  
" Ruth," he cried, anxiously, " What dost thou here ?"

" I came to do the work that I have always heard was blessed, but which I now know to be truly so, for had I not felt pity for the sick and the stranger, I had not this day known a father's blessing."

At this moment the door, after a gentle tap, was opened, and the surgeon in attendance on Smith entered. He stepped up to Mezrack, and delivering to him a note, glided behind the screen to look at his patient. The note was from Marmion, stating, that he was detained by a friend and fellow-prisoner, about the decision of a wager, and he concluded with a hope that Mezrack would wait in his room a short time. The surgeon came from his visit to the sick-bed, and in answer to Ruth's inquiries, pronounced favourably of Smith, observing, that his sleep was profound, and ought on no account to be broken.

"Ruth," cried Mezrack, when they were again alone, "how has it fared with thee in all these years?"

"I will be brief," she replied, "for there is much on which I must not dwell, because 'tis maddening——. O, if a Christian ruined, a Christian also saved me—never was there woman of our nation fairer, gentler, holier, than she with whom I sought refuge and found it."

"Blessed may she be and her race!" ejaculated Mezrack; "thrice blessed for thy sake: But wherefore did my child seek her?"

"Wherefore?" echoed Ruth, clasping her hands, while every feature was convulsed with emotion. "Because, when the Gentile, to whom you trusted me, had wrought my shame; when he had made me that, which the modest daughters of our nation dare not name, he pretended, for he could not believe it, that I was unfaithful; he tore from me the fruit of our guilty love, and left me to the scorn of the stranger. I

fled away—mad and bewildered I went forth. Like Hagar, I lifted up my voice and wept ; but, not like her, had I my child to weep over ; but the same angel that came unto her came surely unto me, and as he showed her the well of pure water, he pointed to me a place of refuge. There, when aweary with weeping, and faint with want, there a Christian woman found me, ministered to me, pitied me, and put confidence in me. O, my father, is it the creed that makes the creature worthy of the Creator ? Is my son, if he lives, less welcome to the God of righteousness, because he be found, as he may be, among the uncircumcised ?”

“ My child,” cried Mezrack, “ thou hast thought deeply—and these are deep matters, meet for a calmer time. Let us not speak of them—tell me of him that wrought thy undoing. Does he live ?”

“ Yes ;” answered Smith, stepping from behind the screen, where he had been listening to the latter part of the previous conversation,

which had grown louder in its earnestness, and had awakened him. "Yes, he lives; but with only so much of life as will let him meet your curse and die! I am no whining culprit: of all my sins I repent but *one*; the wrong I did to *you*, Ruth Mezrack—of all my crimes I ask time but to atone for *that*."

He had torn from the bed a sheet, in which he had wrapped himself: his tall figure, wasted by famine and disease, looked spectral; his voice, hoarse and hollow, had lost every original tone. Mezrack and Ruth sat and gazed upon him as if he was an apparition, and they deemed all that he had uttered the ravings of delirium. But, appalling and impressive as his aspect was, they had no power to speak or move. In the face, wasted and colourless, with sunken, yet glaring eyes, and hair that stood on end from the livid forehead, Ruth did not recognise the betrayer, whose grace of aspect had once lulled her fears of guile. Yet it was he that stood before her—the

changed and fearful thing that guilt, remorse, and wretchedness had made him !

“ Old man,” resumed Smith, “ you look upon me with strange eyes, and I wonder not ; for age has dimmed them. But is there no vestige left of what I once was to remind Ruth of Reginald ? I read in your face,” he added, after a pause, “ how I am changed—let that change plead for me. Look on me, and feel revenged. Wasted, haggard in wretchedness and despair, behold me—now curse me, if you can, and let me die.”

He fell, or rather cast himself on the floor. Ruth flew to him ; she laid her hand upon his brow ; it was cold and clammy ; but he had not fainted. At her approach his eyes opened, and their wild gaze was fixed upon her.

“ My child !” she ejaculated, “ tell me of my child, and all is forgiven thee.”

“ I sold him,” he cried, starting partially from the ground. “ I see you think me mad—I am—not—mad,” he continued, his voice glad-

ing, or rather labouring, through his gnashing teeth. "This hand has held the coins that were paid for him; and this, this felon-member, counted them. I sold him—yes, I sold the offspring of my body, and *your* priceless love—I sold him to the childless Lady Beaucaire!"

"Beaucaire!" repeated Ruth. "Beaucaire!" repeated Mezrack, as the wretched man paused for breath. "Marmion Beaucaire!" uttered both together, as the door opened, and he entered the room.

He stood for a moment, mute and motionless, in wondering contemplation of the scene before him. In that moment how did the eyes of Ruth devour him—as if then only, for the first time, he had met her sight! How did Mezrack fix his gaze upon his new-found grandson—the son of the child of his soul, his cherished daughter, and remember how lately he was willing to sacrifice that young man, lest *his* blood should mingle with the blood of Mezrack!



The blind despiser of his fellow-creature for difference of rank and race, of clime and creed, knows he what he does? All are men, and, which the chosen, must be left to the decision of a more comprehensive judgment than was ever yet granted to Jew or Gentile.

“Smith!” exclaimed Marmion, advancing, with astonishment and concern pictured in his countenance. At the word, which though a solitary sound, expressed so much, the unhappy man started from the floor and stood erect. In the attitude and action of passion there is always majesty, if associated, as in Smith, with grace. Though covered but by a sheet, the Roman, studious even in death of dignity and propriety, never presented a more striking image. He looked like animated sculpture, cold and colourless, yet with the energy of motion.

Marmion felt as if he stood among the spell-bound, for again there was a dead silence. Opposed to the classical aspect of Smith, was the

excited Ruth, her dark eyes were flashing, and her cheek inflamed ; even on the furrowed face of Mezrack there was colour, and in his eyes fire.

“ Marmion !” cried Smith, grasping the arm of his unconscious son. “ He that you met a few days since a famished man—he that you have since succoured—he that now stands before you, hovering between time and eternity—know you who he is ?”

“ Who ?” asked Marmion.

“ *Your father !*”

“ *My father !*” exclaimed Marmion, after a pause, in which his eyes had visited every countenance present, and gathered more than he could comprehend. “ Who then was Sir Ralph Beaucaire ?”

“ Your reputed father, and his wife your reputed mother. Here stands your real one,” and his extended hand pointed out the agitated Ruth ; “ and that old man,” he added, “ is her father, and your grandfather.”

Marmion felt his brain reel. It was a moment of singular effect—in which beings, all so closely allied in blood, stood apart from the influence of opposing feelings. All seemed to depend on Marmion; it appeared to be expected that he should originate the next move in the impressive game that was being played. But what a flood of thought rushed at the instant on his brain, and held him statue-struck ! What a power of analytical and synthetical examination of circumstances, past, present, and to come, did he exercise ! In all that is wonderful in the Maker's works, is there anything so wonderful as this complicated and instantaneous action of the mind ?

Marmion had neither received by education, nor attained by reflection, any enlarged or liberal views of society. He regarded men according to their classes, and all the jealousy and rivalry that make the civil war of life was in full operation upon him. He had never rested on the real constituents of human great-

ness; ill, therefore, could he sustain the loss of the nominal ones.

Mezrack, agitated for his daughter, broke the silence that held her in such painful suspense. His previous knowledge of Marmion aided him in fathoming his thoughts, sufficiently legible, perhaps, in his face.

"Young man," he cried, "you are unhinged; 'tis no wonder; to reconcile you to present circumstances, you must think differently from what you have in time past."

Smith had sunk into a chair, and he looked as might Brutus, or rather the apparition of Brutus, sitting in judgment on his son.

"The name you resign," said Mezrack, "has less to boast than you imagine, and the name you receive more; but leave the folly of thinking of names merely, and learn to look into things. You are the child of the *one* God, and the brother of *all* men; a lineage and relationship nobler than the house of Beaucaire, or any

other house in England, or the universe, could confer."

Men spring not at once from the finite to the infinite. Marmion could not leap the chasm of prejudice; yet he trembled as he stood on the quicksand that he felt shake under him.

"I must," he cried, sullenly, and with difficulty, "have proof, not assertion, to shake my faith in what has appeared to me truth since the time I can remember."

"You cannot require more than you may easily obtain," said Smith, calmly, yet thrillingly.

"And where is it, sir?" cried Marmion, with increased frowardness, now that he had conquered the first effort of speaking. "Where may I seek these proofs?"

"Marmion!" exclaimed the Jew, kindling with unwonted passion; "give some proof of sense, of sensibility—let not your mother's first feeling regarding you be shame. Evil was the

day that grafted you upon the foreign tree, whence you bear the bitter fruit of narrow prejudice, and rank intolerance. Unfortunate young man, I mourn over you—I may not reprove you. You did not choose your destiny—you have become that which your education and association have made you. Here is your mother, and my daughter; I endow her with present thousands, and make her heiress of a million: she will forbear towards you, and pity you, because she knows you are the creature of necessity; you will respect her and obey her, because you will feel you are the creature of dependence.”

“Marmion,” cried Ruth, now first breaking silence, eager to gain upon her son, and avert the pain her father’s words might inflict. “Marmion, did you know how I have sorrowed for you, you would not deny me! Though I but gave you birth and blessed you—though I lost you, to meet sorrow and exile, never were you banished from my heart. The morning light and

the midnight darkness alike found me in prayer for you, and I hoped that, in the allotment of our sorrows, *I* might be permitted to bear *your* share, as well as my own. You owe me more than this—I fostered her unto whom I have learned to know your heart cleaves—I have been to *her* a mother. Is not that something, my son ?”

Ruth had touched the right chord—it vibrated to the depths of his spirit. The sullenness of pride and selfishness melted beneath the beam of love ; and Magdalene’s image, like the miraculous tree that turned the bitter waters of Marah into sweetness, wrought a change upon his feelings. His breast heaved—his lip quivered—he made a momentary struggle, and then yielded to overwhelming emotion. Ruth hastened to her son, and he wept upon her bosom. His tears were to her like the waters of the rock of Horeb, and none ever drank of them with the gladness and the gratitude that animated the soul of Ruth, as she felt her cheek wetted

by the tears of her relenting child, whose errors were, to her, all lost in the remembrance of his injuries. In turn, Marmion received the embrace and blessing of his father, and his grandfather—and to this point the spirits of all sustained them, but no longer : then, the bow, that had been so long bent, relaxed.

“ Now take me to bed,” said Smith ; and when they had laid him down, he added—

“ Here I shall take my everlasting rest.”

Circumstances compelled Mezrack's departure ; but nothing could move Ruth ; she claimed the wife's privilege. That night, companioned by her son, she watched the final struggle, and was called on to close the eyes of him, through whom she had first known love and long known sorrow, and *for* whom she felt, notwithstanding all that was passed, that she should mourn till memory was merged in death and immortality.

Thus knelt beside his bed an Israelite and a Christian ; but there was no clash of creeds, no



jar of opinions ; mutually and alone sensible to that religion which is universal—submission to the incomprehensible Omnipotence that originates and rules all things, and sympathy with the pliant humanity, capable of so much evil and so much good—the mourners poured out their hearts in voiceless prayer. Where, at that moment, was the released spirit ? Freed from the thrall of life, did it pause to gaze on the clay it had lately animated, now lying in the stern beauty of death, with all the characters that sin and sorrow had written on the brow still legible.

All that was left of what once was grace, majesty, and animation, lay in “ cold obstruction,” soon to be profaned by corruption and the worm. The heart, once innocent, once sensitive, and then progressively criminal and callous, laid in the still chambers of that broad breast a violated vessel, cast away, by the abusing hand of guilt, to moulder in oblivion and the grave !

## CHAPTER IX.

THE talismanic power of money soon released Marmion from prison, and, by a singular course of events, he returned to Rushmere a second time, heir of the estate of Vex'em Park, with wealth far beyond what his first years had promised.

Ruth, with the humility and magnificence that distinguish her people, established herself in almost oriental splendour at the Park, in honour of her to whom it had originally belonged. On the site of the hermitage, which had been nearly destroyed by lightning, an elegant cenotaph was raised to the memory of the departed Magdalene Melburn; and every day, Ruth, in commemoration of the refuge which, as Hagar, she had found there, came and made

an offering of gratitude to Heaven, and to the spirit of her friend.

The events that had restored Marmion to distinction (for Mezrack's gold gilded all incongruities) flew abroad, improving the memory of acquaintances, and mitigating the malevolence of foes. Correcting their impressions, (of course, by their experience,) they discovered he had no faults, or very *venial* ones; and he, who could spend a fortune so like a prince, deserved to have a princely fortune. But by way of indemnity for this *disinterested* goodnature, and for fear their powers of censure should deteriorate for want of practice, the crowd looked round for Lady Beaucaire. It was not remembered, that she had been trained into a weak, vain woman; tortured by the indifference of a husband, for whose love she had languished, and tormented by the sneers of those who, if not childless, deserved to be so; for if none had children but such as were fit to educate them, no Malthus or Mar-

tain measures for checking population need be agitated.

But Lady Beaucaire had taken refuge from the general crowd of society, among a sect of the strictest Methodists, who assured her, that Satan's buffetings, which she had experienced, were the most blessed events that could have occurred, since they had ultimately led her to seek the elect, and receive the true light. Thus encouraged, she resigned her toque and turban for a close black bonnet; gave up festivities for love-feasts, and the opera-house for the meeting-house. She added to the merit of her piety the zeal of proselytism, and the first converts she made were Mr. Exmore and his wife, who had so effectually aided her in carrying through the deception she had practised, and had been so amply rewarded for it. They, like her, resolved to atone, by present religious austerity, for their past moral derelictions; and, knowing what their own backslidings had been, they stored their breasts, as an

essential and precautionary measure, with as much suspicion as selfishness had left room for. As Marmion refused to be made a babe of grace, they voted him a son of Belial ; and thus for ever ended all communication between the surreptitious son, and the regenerated sectarians.

If the discovery of Marmion's birth drove some from the crowd of fashion, it called others back to it. When the news reached Vienna, Esther, in the fulness of her heart, revealed to the Baron the history of her love for Marmion ; and, as it appeared, he had Mezrack blood in his veins, and, what was more, was sure to have Mezrack money in his pocket, the communication was not at all unacceptable. Esther had not been idle during her exile, and she returned to England, freed of her former engagement, and dignified with the title of Baroness, having availed herself of a cheap market for such baubles of distinction.

No reason now existed for concealing her

passion for Marmion, and in the expectation of an immediate betrothment, and a no very remote marriage, she made her re-appearance with all the splendour, and courted all the celebrity, that she knew would be gratifying to his proud, ambitious spirit. The trumpet tongue of fame loudly proclaimed the beauty, wealth, and graces of the accomplished Baroness, and the name of Marmion soon became significantly blended with hers. These reports penetrated to the sequestered Magdalene, and strengthened the doubts and fears with which she had ever felt disposed to regard the evidently unstable character of Marmion.

Ruth had sought her, with a view of inducing her to reside at the Park ; an invitation she would have gladly accepted, had she never felt otherwise than indifferent to its heir, or could she now believe she might with safety meet his passion. Ruth fondly desired the union of her son and Magdalene ; but she could not to serve even his interests sacrifice her truth ; and,

when questioned regarding him, in reply to her insinuated praises, she could not deny what she had heard touching his engagement to the Baroness.

"Then he and I are, in all probability, parted for ever," said Magdalene, in a voice in which emotion was evident, and firmness was attempted. "I will not take the 'ruined place' of another. Were she to release him from his vow, he must consent to endure trial, ere I would trust him."

"If he passed the ordeal?" said Ruth, with reviving hopes, yet a hesitating voice.

"If his love survived the time of probation," said Magdalene, "and his conduct attested the reform you say he vows, I might become your daughter-in-law; but, whether or not, I am ever unchangeably your daughter in affection."

"Nobly resolved, my child; I will hope for Marmion,—I will pray for him," said Ruth.

"And you will watch over him," cried her young companion. "O! that circumstances

had left him the mother nature gave him ; how different a being he had become !”

“ Ah ! dearest Magdalene,” exclaimed Ruth, “ when you think of his faults, think how much there is to excuse them. Think, too, who could reform him as you might. The headstrong yield only to those that have a hold upon their hearts, such as yours on his.”

“ Nay, I have no security that I have that hold,” said Magdalene. “ One year ago, I had, I fear, run any risk ; but I have had deep reflection since, and the counsel of wise friends. My spirit can curb, if not conquer its passion. I have heard that experience is well bought at second-hand ; I am resolved, if possible, to do it. I have listened to the history of my mother from your lips, from the lips of Mrs. Trevor ; and I have vowed, in the secret chambers of my heart, *I* will not be, for want of heed, a martyr and a victim. I can master my passions. I feel the pride and power of the empire I have gained. I will not mate myself unequally



—to one that is the slave of his. None would take on them the duty of a wife heedlessly that have thought upon it as I have done. Irrevocable and awful as it is, if not animated by enduring love and deep respect, what does it become ? I could not continue to love where I had ceased to feel esteem—I should become a miserable bondwoman or a moral bankrupt, and either way I must suffer ; for though baseness palliates it does not sanction abandonment ; when the nuptial tie is ruptured, though every other affliction be escaped, self-reproach, the worst of all, will remain.”

“ You are fortified, young as you are,” said Ruth, “ by the best panoply that humanity can wear—rectitude and reason. I feel a pride, too, Magdalene, that I have helped to put these weapons into your hand, though ’tis against my own son you use them.”

The harrow of misfortune had not ploughed long or deep enough in Marmion’s mind to break up its mould to any sufficient purpose.

He had received many severe lessons, and had, for the time, felt them severely. He had practically learned *that* which precept is ever vainly teaching—that pride is the veriest and the weakest vice ; that the advantages of fortune are bubbles, blown up on the waves of circumstances, and are never to be trusted ; and that civility and consideration are not only due to others, but policy as respects ourselves, since in the mutations continually occurring, it is not impossible that the very lowest may be in a situation to serve the very highest, as the stone that the builders rejected became the head of the corner.

But, restored to new fortune, Marmion forgot the one that he had lost, the lessons he had learned ; and, triumphant over affliction, did not remember how little, in that triumph, he owed to himself. Fortunate results are ever held to be the meed of merit ; and the successful man ever persuades himself that he is also a wise one ; the world goes with him, and confirms

him in the impression ; for sympathy springs forward to meet the victorious, but rarely lingers beside the vanquished.

Magdalene was, however, not of the world ; she was the purest ore of female nature, not the alloyed metal that makes, too often, the current coin of society. It may be seen, in her conversation with Ruth, how little perception she had of the distinctions created by wealth, how vivid a one of those arising from worth. As she said, " I will not mate myself unequally," royal maiden never felt more proudly, or expressed more dignity in look and attitude. Yet, tried by the world's standard, she had cause for humiliation. She stood charged with the excommunicating sin of poverty, which, like the Gorgon's head, petrifies all that approach to gaze on it. She was also the offspring of a degraded man ; and if there be one part of Scripture more religiously observed than another, it is that which says, " the sins of the father shall be visited on the children." She was dependent

on the bounty of friends, and was ill fitted for labour in the rude vineyard of the world. Compared with the brilliant fortune of her lover, she was, indeed, humble; but, compared with his moral character, she was indeed exalted. Her seclusion from the selfish trafficking scenes of life; her love of nature, and free study of it in wood and wild; her reading, which had been directed to all that might ennoble her mind; her intercourse with her mother, a woman of great genius; with Ruth, who, if less original and endowed, was highly intelligent; and the subsequent communion with the Trevor family, had all contributed to give Magdalene a power of thought beyond her years, and views, principles, and opinions, which, though all admire when they embellish the pages of the poet and philosopher, few admit to adorn their language or their practice.

Perhaps too the conversation of the aged Mrs. Melburn had, without design on her part, not been very propitious to Marnion. Her mind

was stored with the experience and observation of a long life, and there was much practical wisdom in what she said. Though at first it had offended Magdalene's taste—as the simple diet of the hermit might the palate of one accustomed to more delicate viands,—yet she had a mental stamina that could digest wholesome truths, and by degrees she grew reconciled to hear, and sometimes pleased to examine them. While Magdalene listened to her grandmother's comments, she involuntarily applied many of them to Marmion, as points of his character came in review ; and she set herself the task of strictly examining on what grounds she had preferred him, and what prospect of happiness might flow from her acting upon that preference.

The mercenary would have smiled, and the romantic would have frowned, as she went forth to combat the weakness of her heart with the strength of her head. The one had said, " He hath that which the world worships—wealth : inquire no more, but account thyself blest

among women by his love." The other had said, " Though his faults ' were high as huge Olympus,' *thou* shouldst see none of these ; nay, every blemish, love should transmute into a beauty."

Magdalene, accustomed to seek her *studio* amid the scenes of nature, had just stepped from her grandmother's cottage when she was attracted by the sound of a carriage ; pausing to look at it, she perceived it to be Mrs. Trevor's, and that lady seated within. It stopped at the lowly dwelling of Mrs. Melburn, and Agnes alighted.

“ I have come to claim you again,” she said, embracing her protégée, and entering the house with her. Mrs. Trevor saw that Magdalene was just in the mood in which she wished to find her ; she therefore, with her usual happy facility, reconciled Mrs. Melburn to the abrupt departure of her young relative, who was soon seated beside her friend in the carriage, and wheeling away to Beeshome.

"My dear Magdalene," she cried, after the conversation had proceeded some time, "in my opinion, and I say it in no arrogance, my own is the superior sex. Every woman trained to virtue, and prepared for the task of being a wife and mother, consecrates herself to humanity. She takes the adult being after the corrupting world has inoculated him with a thousand vices—she teaches him the value of a home of peace, and truth, and innocence—the sweetness of undivided love, the beauty of faith and confidence. She takes the infant being and moulds him to moral greatness, and fortifies him against the assaults of vice. Here are tasks! Are there any more important to the interests of humanity? Are there any that task such delicate skill—such unremitting activity?

"O Magdalene," she resumed, after a pause, "how do I daily see some woman of worth and intelligence struggling against the extravagance, the gross selfishness, the weakness of a headstrong husband! who, because he *can*, *will* violate decorum; who, because he *may*, *does* depart

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from duty. He sins, because he will not shun temptation; he speaks false, because he will avoid the odium, not the pursuit of vice, and he domineers to silence the remonstrance that he cannot answer.

“ Marriage is the most hazardous of all engagements—the most unalienable of all; therefore do I require of women caution in forming, and constancy in keeping it. I am not one to uphold the so called ‘divine rights,’ that the policy of power has assumed for men and monarchs, and the indifference of slaves and subjects, both male and female, have acquiesced in. In the marriage contract I behold a compact between two human beings mutually dependent on each other for happiness—equally bound to observe that moral conduct that will preserve it. I make no difference in the iniquity of the violater on either side—each are equally accountable at the bar of truth—equally degraded by a verdict of delinquency. But when once we have called on Heaven to wit-



ness our dedication, I hold that no circumstances may warrant abandonment. Are you not then called on to choose with caution—at any sacrifice to forego him who would demand more than you might have the moral strength to render, and seek where there be better promise of happiness ?”

The innocent Magdalene almost fancied that her friend had a magic power of penetrating to her thoughts, so entirely had the conversation taken their course.

“ I may not,” she said, timidly, and with downcast eyes, “ speak of my sagacity in judging ; but I think I might of my constancy, if I had chosen.”

“ Neither your power of judgment nor endurance are yet tried,” said Mrs. Trevor ; “ the one may prove stronger, and the other weaker than you think for. We are dazzled by a polished surface, but the moral substance is alone of real consequence. The personal advantages, the wit, the grace that blaze in the

assembly and make the favourite of society, depend on the excitements that society furnishes; the being distinguished by these graces is, at the domestic hearth, often the antithesis of what he is in the public room. Beware of those meteor-men that are favourites with women and good fellows with their own sex. Like the *ignis fatuus*, they lead others into the quagmire, over which they pass themselves. They are, like many actors, slovens and sullens at home, to atone to themselves for their overstrained exertions abroad. The bow must be relaxed sometimes—of course it is when it is hung up. You know the clown never plays punch till he has collected a crowd of spectators. The character to which I allude is everything to the world, to which he is as nothing; and nothing at home, to which he should be everything."

Magdalene was received at Beeshome with that exuberant delight which only the very young express. She had scarcely gained the

drawing-room when the Baroness Mezrack was announced. Her residence at the Park had soon been productive of acquaintance with Mrs. Trevor, and pleased with the society she met at her house, she pursued the acquaintance with avidity.

Magdalene coloured deeply on being presented, and then paled again. Esther was interested by the delicacy of her appearance, and, taking a seat by her, conversed with her exclusively; but the conversation was all Esther's; Magdalene had little power to speak, especially when she marked in the splendid bracelet the Baroness wore, a minute miniature of Marmion.

“ ‘ His treachery is truth to me,’ ” said Magdalene, when she had gained her own room. “ Ah ! but truth built on a bad foundation,” she added, repressing the momentary exultation she had felt. “ He is false to her now to be true to me; and he will in turn be false to me to be true to another.”

She had been much struck with the majestic beauty and magnificent appearance of Esther, and now in the comparison she instituted, she discovered her own poverty and simplicity, and felt as if the love that Marmion had expressed to her had been in mockery.

In the midst of these reflections Mrs. Trevor joined her, and Magdalene, with a full heart and a bewildered mind, ingenuously poured every secret thought and feeling into the bosom of her friend. Her confidence was met by benignant sympathy and unrepublishing wisdom. There is nothing charms and enchains attention so certainly as eloquent truth—truth presented by persuasion. The human mind has a natural bias in favour of demonstrative reason, and if phrenology be a true science, it will probably yet discover that the greatest number of minds are logical.

The conversation that engaged Agnes and her protégée had been more pleasing to the metaphysician than the novel reader—character

was traced by the latter from its springs to its consequences ; she argued on the formation, and calculated on the power and probability of change to be produced by after circumstances ; till with perspicuous power she showed that all depended on the early cast given to the mind ; that though man is called the creature of circumstances, it is of the circumstances of his young life ; that, after a certain period, he uses or abuses circumstances according to his character, but *they* work no material change on *that*. Napoleon, after the period of adolescence, would have been the same man in all situations, but his powers might have been so directed by early education, that, instead of panting for war, he might have gloried in cultivating the arts of peace ; instead of thirsting to subjugate, he might have yearned to advance mankind.

The conversation, from the moment that Magdalene and Agnes met that day, had tended to disperse the infatuation to which the former had yielded, and the hopes to which Marmion

yet clung. It was another of his ill chances that, though he had a rival the most generous in Arthur, he had an opponent the most ingenious in Mrs. Trevor. At this juncture of Magdalene's feelings, Agnes (like a skilful general, who, having induced the enemy to disband some of his forces, brings, on his own part, fresh troops into the field, and leads an attack, when his adversary is least prepared for a defence) drew from her pocket-book some letters, and observing that they had been long enough engaged in argument, to desire to seek something more acceptable, with a slight preparatory preface she read a letter from Arthur.

The very name of young Trevor, at this moment, was enough to give to Magdalene's imagination the reverse of the picture that Marmion presented; and as Arthur wrote with grace, and poured out the confidence of a noble and a generous heart to his mother, his pen came as no mean reinforcement of the prepossession established in his favour. Mrs. Trevor acted

mind. More than ever full of the apprehensiveness of pride, since some of its foundations had been shaken ; and accustomed to the slavish homage of the mean and the mercenary, he felt an access of resentment that stifled the emotions of love. He turned away incensed ; in the unguarded moment of anger, he dropped the mask that he had hitherto, in a measure, worn, and Magdalene saw enough to satisfy her that he was not one to whom she might safely trust for happiness. The last link that attached her to him was loosed, and she stood free, as a regenerated spirit, of the weakness that had for a time touched her. She had come into the scene, in which she thus triumphed over herself and her lover, with a grace so simple, a beauty so meekly worn, and a manner so gentle in its dignity, that Marmion was little prepared to find her armed in proof with the wit that parried his advances, and the wisdom that disarmed his rage. Thrown back upon himself, he discovered his own weakness as unexpectedly as he, at the

same moment, discovered his adversary's strength, and it is difficult to say from which he felt most discomfiture. Surprised at Magdalene—displeased with himself, he retreated with what address he might ; but, like the offended Achilles, he retired with

“ ——— rage oppress'd,  
His heart swelled high, and labour'd in his breast.  
Distracting thoughts by turns his bosom ruled,  
Now fir'd by wrath, and now by reason cool'd.”

When he recovered himself, urged by resentment against Magdalene, rather than won by the deep love of Esther, he devoted himself with apparent ardour to the latter. The Baron had grown proud of his prospective son-in-law, and Mezrack pleased at an alliance that he deemed a security for the happiness of the child of his beloved Ruth. Ruth herself, in failure of Magdalene, could not desire for Marmion more than Esther offered ; thus all contributed to keep him to the course he had taken, and he felt himself dragged on by a chain of enforcing circumstances.



Ill at ease, amid all the glitter of his fortune, and destitute of the resources of a well-cultivated mind, the country soon ceased to afford him sufficient excitement, and he sought the more extended arena of the metropolis ; where, like the Roman gladiator, he might dare the desperate contests at which the passions preside, but from which reason revolts. He was paced, like a caparisoned charger that is led forth for show, through all the vapid scenes of fashion ; where crowds of beings meet to weary of each other, to display self, and to be enabled to talk afterwards, with pride, of association in which they felt no pleasure.

In every scene his eye sought for Magdalene, but found her not. Mrs. Trevor had no vulgar ambition, no love of empty parade ; she abjured the suffocating crowd, in which converse is impossible, and association a farce ; in which society presents some such a picture as the pen-folds of a sheep-market, only that there is less innocence and more foolishness present : for the

lamb would not voluntarily run to the slaughter of his life as the human being does to the sacrifice of his time; nor stand a willing prisoner among a crowd, if he had, like the human biped, the free power of locomotion.

Magdalene might have been found adorning a select and social circle, which was continually being varied and enlarged by the really great from all classes. At Mrs. Trevor's house the enlightened nobleman found himself beside the ingenious mechanic; the rich merchant beside the struggling trader; the pastor, "passing rich with forty pounds a year," had a chance of being presented to the benevolent bishop with many thousands. The literary aspirant, full of the buds of genius, yet fearful of putting them forth, met the enlightened publisher and the candid critic. Mrs. Trevor moved in this circle, full of cheerful intelligence and good intention. Kindly regardful of all, she was most attentive to those that in general meet the least notice—the poor and the diffident.

She knew that *they* laboured under a cloud that will not let the light of the spirit shine forth. She often declared that the sun of heaven never gladdened her more than did the moral sun from human hearts ; and that of all the blessings for which she had reason to thank her Creator, she was most grateful for the sensibility and sympathy he had granted her towards her fellow-creatures. She held, she said, congenial association as a principal pleasure, universal association a paramount duty.

“ We call ourselves Christians,” she added, “ but where do we recognize our brethren as the children of a common parent, as beings alike powerless at birth, and perishable in death, and filling the intervening space as we can, and not as we would ? Exclusiveness is the vice of pride. Better would it please our God to make this world a place of common fellowship, than, like the costly cathedral, with its gilded pews and seatless aisles, a place of invidious distinctions. Even the common of religion has been parcelled out by pride ; the selfish line of de-

marcation drawn where God himself says all are equal! I cannot re-model society; but I may regulate my own house: and my practice shall exemplify my principle. I will endeavour to imitate the Great Master, and say, ‘Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden,’ not to learn *of* me, but to learn *with* me, and to learn that greatest, most consolatory of all truths—that *we are all brethren.*”

Some one remarked that there was a great difference in the brothers.

“True,” she rejoined, “and why? May not the cause be found in the spirit of proscription which operates to prevent that intercommunion which would liberalize the rich, and refine the poor? The former cannot endure the infringement of the mere points of empty etiquette which the latter are disqualified to observe. Dress, display, and fashion are estimated beyond intelligence and sociality. We want cheap or gratuitous moral amusements, and zealous moral teachers for the people. To what may the in-

crease of methodism be ascribed? To the zeal of its ministers, who, though often preaching a revolting doctrine, under all the disadvantages of ignorance and vulgarity, have yet evinced a warmth, an energy that aroused the attention, and excited the feelings of their hearers. If the same energy was exerted to awaken the powers of reason, to appeal to the moral affections, can we doubt of the effect that might be produced? May not congregations of rationalists be collected as well as congregations of fanatics? Why have we not places of amusement and moral instruction, museums, and libraries, open to the people?"

"Because the vulgar," cried the objector, "spoil the works of art without improving by them; waste that which they are not worthy to use."

"How long will they do that?" she rejoined. "Only while they *are* vulgar; which they must ever be if there is no attempt to make them otherwise. Afford to all proper means, and God

nas so gifted his creatures, that they will accomplish the right end. Cannot we take a hint from the ancient philosophers? Oral instruction, the most effective of any, is scarcely known among us. Are there no moral missionaries who will teach moral philosophy, without alarming the ignorant by saying it is such? Cannot they give moral illustrations, simple and evident in their application, beautiful in their truth, and enforced with eloquence and benignity."

"Then you would have public walks, and peripatetic philosophers?"

"Yes; I admire their doctrine and mode of teaching."

"And how would you support the expense of all this?"

"By curtailing pensioned pomp—by annulling hereditary and unearned honours—by applying to real utility, the wealth devoted to empty show. A great man has said, that 'he deserved well of his country who made a blade

of grass to grow where grass had never grown before.' How much more does he deserve that plants good feelings and useful ideas in the moral waste or wilderness of a barren or neglected mind—who teaches, without technical parade, or professional pomp, a knowledge of moral nature, of physical nature, of the gentle humanities, of all the most general and useful truths."

"And you imagine this would effect a happy change on the poorer classes?"

"Let it be tried. To what do the more cultivated classes owe their propriety of manner, discretion, and discrimination? To the facility of access to moral instruction, delicate amusement, and judicious association. Can no practical effort be made to give these to all the other grades of society? Yes, easily. But no; the grand aim is to increase wealth, not happiness. Large revenues are prized beyond an improved or contented people. Thus the vintner's gaudy palace everywhere seduces the poor

man to drunkenness; but not one institution rises to invite him to rational amusement, and through that medium to moral amelioration. The coffee-shops, where he can procure a cheap, unintoxicating beverage, and have at the same time access to a little literary knowledge, I hail as one step in the poor man's favour."

"Why do you not come forward yourself in his favour, my dear Mrs. Trevor? If there are to be lecturers on moral philosophy, after the fashion you describe, where shall we find them sooner or better than among your own sex?"

"Nowhere," she replied, "if mind and moral courage experienced any adequate cultivation among women. They have a natural eloquence, a quick and delicate perception, not to mention beauty, grace, and expression, which some, though not all, might bring to the task, that would render them most efficient as lecturers and teachers. But I do not despair. Our progress may be somewhat too slow, but it is sure. Can I tell you how my woman-pride



of grass to grow where grass had never grown before.' How much more does he deserve that plants good feelings and useful ideas in the moral waste or wilderness of a barren or neglected mind—who teaches, without technical parade, or professional pomp, a knowledge of moral nature, of physical nature, of the gentle humanities, of all the most general and useful truths."

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is gratified by the galaxy of female talent exhibited at the present day—by the genius of the exquisite, the inspired Hemans, whose mind may be said to be a ‘mansion for all sweet forms, a dwelling-place for all sounds and harmonies.’—By the genius of the admirable Harriet Martineau—the graphic, animated Mr. Trollope—the elegant Sarah Austen, who gives to translation the grace and soul of originality—and how many more might I name besides her to whom my spirit springs across the wide Atlantic, and hails among the ornaments of fair and free America—Mrs. Child.”

“ You are an enemy to selfish and exclusive feeling, my dear Mrs. Trevor—what do you call this exultation—?”

“ Wrong, wrong, perhaps,” she interrupted; “ but I am part and parcel of the old stock of selfishness, and it is something in my favour that I can get beyond myself, though I cannot beyond my sex. When you look at all the professional mummery existing—at the millions

of busy idlers moving to and fro in the world, like mites in a cheese—looking important, but promoting nothing that is so—letting the real business of life, that of making humanity in the mass better and happier, literally stand still—when you see all this, what is your opinion of the superior sagacity that has carried society to this consummation? Really,” she continued, with expressive irony in her smile and tone, “there ought to be an annual, universal festival, called ‘The Carnival of the Conjurors,’ and all the Tom-a-Bedlams have a holiday on that day.”

“Too bad, too bad!” cried Mr. Trevor to his lively wife, with gentle reproachfulness. “If, as you seem to imagine, you may yet find out a better moral road than we have, remember you have had the benefit of our experience, experiments, and errors, and are much in the situation of the dwarf that got up on the giant’s shoulders.”

“Well; only let him be gallant enough

to accept a little guidance which the dwarf graciously designs to give him, and I shall be satisfied," she exclaimed, as she glided away, lest the conversation might progress to her disadvantage.

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## CHAPTER X.

A NEW comedy, from the popular pen of a female writer, attracted Marmion to the theatre. He came in attendance on Esther, who was companioned by a lady and the Baron. When his party were seated, Marmion retreated to the back of the box, whence, unobserved himself, he might at leisure observe others. The curtain fell, and he then turned his opera-glass to that portion of the audience that were directly before him,—the only part of it which, from his position, he could see. His attention was soon caught and fixed. Immediately opposite, one of a small party, sat Magdalene, and behind her chair stood Arthur Trevor.

From the moment Marmion made the discovery, he could see, he could attend to no-

thing else. Magdalene was improved in beauty, and looked serenely happy. Arthur, even to the jealous eye of his rival, appeared with all the grace, all the dignity, manhood might wear. It was evident, from his attentions to Miss Melburn, and the manner in which they were received, that he was a lover, and a favoured one. The frequent turning of her graceful head, her smile, winningly lovely and witchingly playful, attested the attention she gave him, and the pleasure she received. All was too plain—Magdalene was lost to Marmion for ever !

Endeared to the family into which she had been adopted, its members had clustered round her with resistless affection—she became the nucleus of the circle. The moral atmosphere in which she dwelt was eminently calculated to mature a mind prepared as hers had been, and her genius ripened and developed itself rapidly. While she was yet new to her congenial home, Arthur appeared in its midst, at once the most

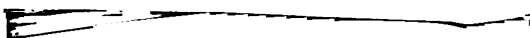
distinguished and most unpretending of the circle. Time had effected no change in his feelings, and he was again instantly drawn by an irresistible attraction towards Magdalene—it was soon a mutual feeling. They became almost inseparable companions, with that unwearying pleasure which those that truly love experience in the society of each other. Love gave new charms to their intelligence, and intelligence vitality to their love: both possessed that moral beauty and mental power that is incapable of decay; and only pauses, or appears to pause, in its translation to a higher state of existence.

At the close of the comedy the Trevors rose. Arthur tenderly shawled Magdalene, and drawing her arm through his, followed his mother and Hubert to the carriage. The next morning Magdalene was to be a bride, and there was a joy too deep for words seated in every breast. Marmion, who had left his box the moment after they retired from theirs,



caught a view of Miss Melburn just as she was about to enter the carriage: she was pausing with her hand in Arthur's, whose sheltering arm was round her.

Maddened at the sight, Marmion rushed on. he neither knew nor cared whither. Unaccustomed to check his passions, opposition heightened them to madness, and prompted him to purchase gratification at any risk. Ambitious and arrogant, he coveted superiority for himself, but could not support it in another. Restless and ungrateful, he ever fancied pleasure in pursuit, but contemned it in possession. Maddened by love for Magdalene, by jealousy against Arthur, Marmion paced the streets with an imagination that magnified all he must forego, and a thanklessness that undervalued all he might enjoy. Amid all his acquaintances, he had not one friend from whose sympathy he might have sought relief; for even on his ill-regulated mind, affection and good sense might have wrought to some effect—the very act of



confiding to another the feelings that tortured his breast would have ameliorated his sufferings. But it is not among those merely attracted by wealth, drawn together by the views or necessities of interest, or the forms of fashion, that attachment is to be expected or aid sought—all such are mere bubbles, each inflated with self-consequence, and trying to reflect the little light they are able to catch. Nor was Marmion, had he made one of a better circle, now very capable of creating sympathy, of inviting friendly counsel or considerate admonition. There grew a ruggedness about him, that effectually repelled all such advances. His contempt of the world was unwisely cherished and weakly proclaimed; his opinions were dogmatically pronounced, as they were inconsiderately formed. His arrogance left him without retreating ground; therefore contest with him could have no issue but submission to avoid conflict, or conflict to obtain victory. Hence superior minds passed him by as a dangerous, ill-directed being; the meaner

ones availed themselves of his weakness, which they used to their own advantage and his further injury. Thus he was fast verifying the remark of Dr. Johnson, that the man of talent who wants the social amenities of life "is like a naked mountain with veins of gold, he will be frequented only till the treasure is exhausted."

And thus, too, Marmion's natural advantages availed him little: like the beacon light that warns the mariner, but attracts the sea-gull, the judicious avoided, the weak submitted to their influence; and, much as he possessed to command success and secure felicity, he was ever unfortunate and unhappy. Little would it matter how otherwise well-appointed were the ship that wanted sails to catch the wind, and a rudder to direct its course: though in these days of steam, Marmion were better likened to a steam-vessel, that wants an experienced engineer, that comes on all foam and fury, with an over-heated boiler and closed safety-valves, and

which all avoid, since there is no saying when it may not burst, to the destruction of itself and those nearest to it.

The course of thought to which Marmion yielded after quitting the theatre, led, as might be expected, to the most violent resolves. He came to the conclusion that there was but one measure he could adopt; and as neither rival would resign the prize, appeal must lie to that sanguinary contest which would decide for them. Arrived at this conclusion, he hastened home, and addressed Arthur in a few hasty lines, demanding a meeting at five o'clock the following morning: he declared he had a prior and unalienable claim to Miss Melburn—the claim of a love that could not allow him to surrender her to another and survive. He entreated Arthur to waive the forms and attendance usual on such meetings, and to come as he should do, unattended.

This letter was just concluded when his valet ventured some inquiry respecting arrangements

for the morning, thus reminding Marmion of an engagement to a breakfast party at the Baron's villa. So mechanically does habit act, that in the very midst of the passions that were preying on Marmion's mind, and the probabilities that threatened his life, he carelessly took up a sheet of paper, fabricated a falsehood, and wrote a commonplace excuse. Sealing this note, and the one he had previously written, he handed them to his servant, desiring that they might be instantly delivered as directed.

"*Instantly*," he added, in the most peremptory manner; "*one* of them is of the first importance."

When alone, Marmion drew out his watch. It was just midnight, and he began to number the hours he might probably have yet to live. He was perfectly calm; the vent he had given his feelings had acted like the application of the lancet in a case of inflammation. His pulse was lowered; he was even capable of counting it steadily himself. Now, with that power and

perspicuity of mind that might have been directed to such noble purpose, he looked abroad upon the scene he was, perhaps, about to quit for ever—thought on those in it to whom his fate might be matter of moment and misery. Many crowded at the call of memory, but judgment put them by, saying, “They have written thy name in the sand, and the next tide shall wash all trace of it away.” Not so came the image of Ruth Mezrack, his mother. He remembered the scene in the prison, on the night his father died—her deep devotion beside that bed of expiring sin and bitter suffering—her prayers, her tears, when death struck the palpitating heart and stilled its nerves for ever.

“*She* will mourn for me,” said the solitary muser. “To me she transferred the unextinguished love of her youth: for me she transmuted the maternal sorrow of many years into maternal affection; her passionate tenderness sought to indemnify me, as her passionate imagination endowed me. She will soon know

what it is I am—what I have been. And after all, must this blow reach her, and through me, from whom she should have healing and not hurt ! O God ! if it be thus the virtuous suffer and the wicked triumph, how shall we vindicate thy justice but by referring to that future, where the good may hope for glory, and the vile for——mercy ? Mercy !” he ejaculated, casting himself, with a sudden impulse of devotion, on his knees. “ *Thy* mercy is infinite, and may, therefore, reach even unto me. O ! when my passions shall be allayed by death, remember not my offences against me ! When the accuser shall cry, ‘ Behold he sinned !’ be there one to say, ‘ He was tempted.’ When thou hearest how I have been wicked in my day, wilt thou not think how I was weak in my nature ?”

The striking of a clock near him called his attention. He counted three. He knew that there was not more than sufficient time for him to gain the place at which he had appointed Arthur to meet him. He started on to his feet.

His loaded pistols lay on the table before him ; he took them up, disposed of them about his person, and covered himself with a large cloak. Tumultuous London lay hushed, like a slumbering giant, into stillness, when Marmion stepped cautiously forth. The faint dawn was struggling with the darkness, as the feeble gleam of truth was contending with the mass of error in his mind ; and perhaps the one, as the other, had strengthened and triumphed had time been allowed. He felt a chill as he passed along—it was not the chill of fear—he wrapped his cloak closer round him. How well act the instincts, how weakly the reason of man ! How, in prompt obedience to the unerring dictates of the first, he shields the body, while the warnings of the other vainly admonish him to shield the soul !

When Marmion gained the ground, more punctual than even himself, he perceived his adversary pacing to and fro. He, too, was



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"The way it was" was the first of the series.

"What time is that?" he ~~examined~~ - "What time is that?" he asked, with interest, as a confirmation of the time and accents of her lips, the face of her mantle fell aside and showed the dazzling dress in which, some hours before, she had left the theatre. "What," he continued, as was as surprise would let him speak, "what brings you here?"

"I'm not realness, where I should seize re-

venge. No words, but take your ground ; *my* purpose is as immoveable as that. ' Spare yourself," she added, as she perceived him again about to speak—" I see not why woman as well as man should not seek satisfaction when injured, and *I* am one that *will*. But as you had the cowardice to abuse my faith, you may want the courage to stand my fire."

" Your humour shall be complied with," cried Marmion, stung by the contemptuous tone in which the taunt was uttered. " If I fall by your hand, 'twill be but just. When I give the signal, take a steady aim ; your hand need not falter—*I* shall not fire."

" It will not falter, whether you do or not," she cried, as she turned away.

In a few moments the report of a pistol was heard, and Marmion fell: there was a brief pause—a second pistol was discharged, and Esther was a suicide !

When the morning sun came upon that scene,

what did it behold ? Youth and beauty “cut down like the flower of the field !”

As the day advanced, two hearses moved slowly into town, just as the bridal equipage of the happy Magdalene and Arthur, who were unconscious of the recent calamity, left London. As may readily be guessed, Marmion had misdirected the note designed for young Trevor—it reached the hands of the Baroness, and produced the catastrophe recorded.

The beautiful Esther and her unhappy lover were laid in the sepulchres of their fathers. Their kindred rent their garments, and set up the mourning-lights ; and after a little while, all that remained of beings adorned and endowed with every attribute for happiness, was a name to

“Point a moral and adorn a tale.”

Ruth rested on a rock that had sustained her through all trial,—“a God of truth, and without iniquity.” Bereaved of the child to whom her hopes had clung, she did not shut her heart

up in the desolation of a selfish grief; she opened it unto all. She took unto her alike the child of Jew and Gentile, and endowed schools that had for their principle *the exclusion of none*; for she thought, as God hath mercy unto all, unto all should man have charity. However diversified the means adopted, she saw that there is but one object pursued—the attainment of happiness; she knew that can only be according to the character of society and the individual; and that character, whether innate or acquired, or a mixture of both, can alone be moulded or made by education.

Poetical justice will demand some record of Malfort, exhibiting the retribution he merited: none such have we to give. Nor can we clear up the circumstance of Sir Ralph Beaucaire's death. Malfort had, probably, that to add to the catalogue of his crimes. Yet it is not impossible that, by subsequent good conduct, he might, in a measure, redeem the past; and it is

still more certain, that in suffering, he would atone it; for there are two facts grounded on experience, fully established, that there are none so evil as to be utterly incapable of good, and none so prosperous in wickedness as to escape punishment.

THE END.













